"MY KINGDOM FOR A HORSE!"

By WILLIAM ALLISON

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W. Allison
1917

"MY KINGDOM FOR A HORSE!"

YORKSHIRE, RUGBY, BALLIOL, THE BAR BLOODSTOCK AND JOURNALISTIC RECOLLECTIONS

BY

WILLIAM ALLISON

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TO
MEMBERS OF BALLIOL COLLEGE
AND
RUGBEIANS
OF ALL AGES
THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED
BY
ONE OF THEM

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PROLOGUE

Being Preliminary Information for Opponents of Racing—How I became interested in Bloodstock and Racing in Early Days—How I indulged in Betting—The Kingcraft "Orgy"—Birmingham Dog Show preferred to "Smalls"—Beaten for "Mods." by Prince Charlie

MANY people have often urged me to write reminiscences, but I have felt personally disinclined to do so, until the discovery that my sister had preserved practically all the letters I ever wrote to her in young days has led me to reconsider the position, for these letters contain a great deal of matter which may prove of general interest if only I can discriminate among them rightly, and without thought of myself, to whom they are all interesting.

At the very outset I am going to give the opponents of racing what they may think chapter and verse as proof conclusive of the disastrous influence of the love of horses on a promising career. Later on, I shall show that all such inferences are entirely fallacious; but for the moment I make them a present of the following brief record.

"I CANNOT cure him, do '*vat I can*'!" Such was the remark of William or Henry Stebbing, made in my presence, in the summer of 1857, when I, a very small boy indeed, with my father and mother and the late Mr Joseph Arrowsmith, of Sowerby, Thirsk, accompanied also by Mr Simpson (a Proctor of York) and his wife, were in the stables on Hambleton, and Mr Simpson, as self-sufficient men will do, had walked up to a horse in one of the stalls and narrowly escaped being lifted to the ceiling by a vigorous kick. The horse was, however, roped and chained from every side, and he screamed.

roared and kicked in such frenzy at having been touched that the memory of him has always been a vivid one in my mind, though I was only six years old at the time. The Stebbing who made the ridiculous remark quoted above was a big, stout man, and it probably was William, as he appears in the *Calendar* as the owner of Vatican. William Day, in one of his books, states that the Stebbing brothers were anything but practical horsemen, and it may well have been so, for never in present times is a horse so mismanaged as to become such a savage as Vatican then was. They had actually gone to the length of having him blinded by a vet. from Thirsk: but so absolutely did he establish his reign of terror that they destroyed him in 1859. Why we were on Hambleton to see him I do not know, but inasmuch as the very last of Vatican's foals was one bred by Mr Arrowsmith out of a mare called Pessima (*G. S. B.*, vol. ix.) and foaled in 1860, the same mare having had foals by Vatican in 1857 and 1858, it is safe to infer that her owner was instrumental in taking us all there to see the horse.

I can fix the approximate date of the visit, for I have come across a letter from Mr Simpson to my father, dated *4th July* 1857, in which there is the following:—

> Mrs Simpson unites with me in very kind regards to Mrs Allison, yourself and the children, and in the hope soon to avail ourselves of your kind invitation for us to visit you.
>
> Believe me, my dear sir, ever, yours sincerely,
>
> THOMAS SIMPSON.

Vatican was foaled in 1846, and he was among the best of his year. Moreover, he raced until he was six years old, with considerable success. Such as he was, however, when I saw him, he represents my first abiding memory of a thoroughbred horse, and might perhaps be regarded as a deterrent.

But I used always to be in a carriage with my mother at Thirsk Races, and see George Thompson, Tom Spence and other notables ride for the Hunt Cup and the Silver Cup. Vatican and the horror of him served but as an episode.

Now read the following, undated, but written in September, 1863, from Coxwold Vicarage :—

DEAR POLLY,

I suppose you know the winner of the St Leger, but supposing you don't, I will tell you: Lord Clifden first, Queen Bertha second, Borealis third. Lord Clifden didn't start until they had got two hundred yards, and one old gentleman said: "A hundred to one that he is nowhere," but he won quite easily.

Your affectionate brother, WILLIE.

The following year was Blair Athol's, which drove us all mad on the subject of racing, but I have written so very much about Blair Athol at various times that I will let this most glorious of all horses pass on the present occasion.

I went to a preparatory school at Rugby the following year, and from there wrote as follows :—

OAKFIELD HOUSE,
May 29th 1865.

DEAR POLLY,

If you have an account of the Derby send it to me, for I have not been able to get a paper. I was top of the class last week and I think I shall be second this week. I can beat all the class but one boy and I can beat him in everything but French. We have cricket matches every holiday. There is not a nasty boy in the school.

There is a small boy being thrashed on the table at present, so I cannot write very well. Is there good fishing now ?

My love to all.

W. ALLISON.

I must clearly have been not unpopular at that time—at any rate, it is obvious I had not been dealt with after the manner of the "small boy on the table," with whom I seem to have had no sympathy.

Now comes a letter which to some minds will suggest the *facilis descensus* :

RUGBY, *June* 1869.

MY DEAR POLLY,

Now in the first place I want the Calf money and 10s., as I have got Kirby's puppies and have paid for them, advancing

the £2, 5s. until you remit. By so doing I have left myself destitute. As a general thing I have kept myself most opulent *by judicious betting*. I backed Scottish Queen for the One Thousand, and Pretender for the Derby. By the last transaction I won £3, 10s. from Mr Denman, but lost £1, 10s. of it by backing Scottish Queen for the Oaks. Altogether, however, I have cleared a nice round sum and paid all my bills, save one, and that, the man, being of a mild and gentle disposition, has neglected to send in although I told him to do so.

Yours affectionately,

W. ALLISON.

Scottish Queen was backed solely because she was by Blair Athol. Mr Denman, referred to above, was a well-known commission agent and originator of a "system" which for a time worked well.

Now, so far, the moral decadence which is supposed to result from betting had not got hold of me, for this is the last report of me written by good old Dr Temple when he quitted the headmastership of Rugby to become Bishop of Exeter:

RUGBY
SIXTH FORM

Report for term ending Xmas 1869

ALLISON

Doing very well.

In all ways satisfactory, but I fear that his health keeps him much back.

F. EXON.

As to the health question, more anon, and I pass to what the "unco guid" might deem a dreadful outbreak:

RUGBY, *June* 1870.

DEAR POLLY,

I dare say you don't know who won the Derby—in which case I may as well tell you that Kingcraft did, to the utter astonishment of everybody and the great delight of me, who had put a small sum on him a month or two ago at remunerative odds and won £20, which, minus commission, came to £19, 2s. He is the only horse I backed and so I lost nothing.

In consequence we had an orgy last night in honour of Kingcraft. There were, as usual, five of us, and we had a beautiful

piece of salmon at 2s. 9d. a pound, lamb, green peas and young potatoes, a magnificent ice pudding, which is, I think, the best dish of the kind there is, combining all the merits of a trifle with those of ices. We finished up with pine apples and had a capital brew of claret cup.

After Prayers we went to Holden's room, and commenced a grand squirting match with garden syringes, which we had got for various purposes.

Still and I were attacking Stuart Wortley, and perfectly drenched him, when suddenly Still got in between S. W. and me just as I was squirting. Of course he received the contents in the nape of the neck.

He then thought I had turned against him, and instantly with S. W. made at me. My squirt was empty, and there was no more water. I fled out of the room door into the passage, which was quite dark excepting for the light coming from the room.

About three yards from the door I came violently in contact with someone, insomuch that I knocked my squirt out of my hand, and sent the person staggering against the whitewashed wall. The next moment I saw it was Mr Elsee, and fled, before I was distinguished, round the corner. Still, however, thought the figure was me ; and, bent on vengeance, with a triumphant shout of "Hi!" he discharged the whole contents of a large garden syringe into the face of Mr Elsee. He then saw who it was and rushed past him and escaped to where I was. Stuart Wortley was the only one he made out, and we heard him say : "Stuart Wortley, there *are* limits to these follies!"

Then Stuart Wortley also fled. We heard him come striding after us round the passages, but as, of course, he thought it undignified to run, we escaped him and were soon in bed. The worst of it was, as we went round the passages with him in pursuit, we could not help bursting out into fits of laughter. He has not as yet said anything, and I dare say he will not, but whatever he does say or do will be more than compensated by the sport we had. I don't think I ever laughed so much in my life.

Yours affect.

W. Allison.

P.S.—I have saved £5 from the general wreck and sent it to Tom to pay various dog expenses.

It might be thought from the above that Kingcraft's Derby victory was fraught with evil consequences for some of us, but Stuart Wortley is now Lord Stuart of Wortley, and never took to gambling, while Still is one of

the best known and most highly respected of London solicitors. Yet they did these things, and I think the incident, as recorded, speaks very well for our housemaster, Mr Elsee, better known as "Bull." Not even Sir Isaac Newton, when his dog, Diamond, upset the candle on his manuscripts, spoke with more perfect self-restraint.

There is a good deal more in the story, however, than is disclosed in my letter. My sister is four years older than I am, and it would seem that I did not venture to tell her the whole truth, which was that we put £5 on Kingcraft for the Derby at 4 to 1 before the 2000 Guineas of that year, and it was not until after he was so badly beaten for that race that he retired to "remunerative odds."

The £5 was acquired in the following way:—I was busy writing Latin verses in my study one evening, and there were present three or four of the usual set. We were all hard up, but it was known that my guardian, Mr Joseph Arrowsmith, already mentioned, would send me money whenever I asked for it: so then one or other of them wrote a letter to him, asking for a remittance of £15 and passed it to me to sign, which I did without a moment's hesitation. It was posted and despatched and, sure enough, by return of post there came the £15, with a letter addressing me as "Dear Sir" and enclosing a form of receipt with stamped, directed envelope for return.

We were more or less like the early Christians and had all things in common in those days, so that the only rights of ownership I exercised consisted in taking the £5 to send to George Crook at Boulogne, to back Kingcraft, leaving us £10 to go on with, which was enough in all conscience. When Kingcraft was so badly beaten for the 2000 Guineas the idea of his winning the Derby was dismissed, and on that Derby afternoon I was again writing Latin verses, when my friends rushed in to say Kingcraft had won.

I hate interruption when I am busy writing, and, not for a moment believing them, drove them wrathfully

from my study. But Kingcraft had indeed won, so that we got not merely the £19, 2s. as mentioned in the letter but the £5 stake back again, and that, added to the £10 already in hand, made up £34, 2s., a goodly sum indeed when you are at school.

I must, in further justice to Mr Elsee, add here that he never said another word about the events recorded, but he did send for me shortly afterwards and say: "I am told that you take a sporting paper for purposes of betting. I must request you to desist from doing so."

That was all he said, and it was quite true that I did take *The Sportsman* in those days, but not for purposes of betting—in which I never had any real interest—but to read the articles of "The Special Commissioner," good old Fred Taylor. How little did I dream then that I should one day occupy his place!

Now, shortly before this time, had come in a report from Doctor Hayman, the then headmaster of Rugby, and I never saw it until the other day:

RUGBY SCHOOL
SIXTH FORM
Report for Easter Term 1870
ALLISON

I think he might put forth more power, even after every allowance on the score of health has been made. His Tutor finds it difficult to get him to work as if interested. This will hardly do for Balliol.—Unpunctual.

HENRY HAYMAN.

I have nothing to say about the above report just now, for I am furnishing the anti-racing people with a brief, and have my own explanations to make later on. Another letter from Balliol College, dated 5th December 1870, to my sister, says:

When I went to the Dog Show [Birmingham] I, of course, forgot to put my name down for "Smalls," and consequently cannot go in for them until the end of next term. This is really all for the best as I should have been ploughed this term to a certainty.

Yet even before that period there is a letter written from Balliol College on 30th October 1870:

DEAR POLLY,

It seems that you and Tom nearly won much money the other day. I *did* win, though it was only the sum of £3. Still, that is better than losing. I also went out one day with the intention of backing Bonny Swell for a place—I should have got 25 to 1—but I unfortunately forgot, and the next day was too late. Of course he did get a place.

My scout and I were both of opinion that Adonis would win, and are now both of opinion that Syrian will win the Liverpool Cup.

Now I will lead the opponent of racing a stride or two further and leave him to digest this Prologue, which, I warn him, will not ultimately work out to his own satisfaction. I find a letter of 17th March 1871:

DEAR POLLY,

The Term is now well nigh over and I am at present engaged in the arduous occupation of passing, or endeavouring to pass "Smalls." I have done one paper (Euclid) and do not think I am ploughed as yet. But there are several more horrid ones impending and the issue is doubtful.

Friday.

I am through "Smalls" all right, and was even complimented on the excellence of my papers—a thing which is very rare. We had the hardest arithmetic paper there has been for some time, and I only just managed to avoid getting ploughed.

We pass on to 1872, and I present the anti-racing man with the following awful example:—

If there was ever anything in which I was pre-eminent, it was in the writing of Latin verses—a most useless accomplishment, but my own in those days—and to prove what the strength of it was I give the record of results of an examination at Rugby in the winter term of 1868, prior to which time I had been absent for nearly a year.

MARKS OF EXAMINATION

Name	*Latin Prose*	*Latin Verse*	*Latin Unseen*
Warner, ma. W.	102	126	129
Allison	102	150	99
Wilson	82	77	102
Stuart Wortley	98	119	108
Stevenson	73	107	75
Masterman	95	80	129
Gilbert	68	71	105
Bonham-Carter, ma. J.	79	—	90
Shirley	72	135	18
Lean, ma. G. S.	71	137	105
Arnold, ma. W. T.	76	90	108
Hannen	47	—	63
Campbell, mi. C.	56	—	90
Lushington, ma. T. G.	96	121	87
Bailward	71	109	90
Wauton, ma. H. G.	50	60	90
Robertson, ma. J. M.	62	—	30
Holden	77	94	abs.
Westfeldt, ma. G. R.	58	—	91
De Bunsen	53	111	91
Lefroy, ma. F.	76	60	75
LOWER BENCH			
Walton, ma. F.	75	90	81
Watkins	76	68	108
Williamson, ma. R. J.	49	70	93
Yorke	83	48	66
Forster, mi. F. S.	73	47	84
Lester, mi. H. F.	73	70	72
Barrington	72	57	96
Thompson	64	75	54
Bayley	57	47	75
Bolton, ma. W. H.	70	45	41
Norton	abs.	40	abs.
Worthington	71	65	105
Clough	50	17	72
Janion	78	37	57
Moss, ma. F. B.	66	70	42
Riley, ma. H.	75	58	78
Michell	73	77	84
Venables	78	47	63
The Twenty			
Steel	75	81	123
Kennedy	56	68	66

The Latin verse* pre-eminence in the above record is sufficiently obvious, but my dear, good housemaster, Dr Jex Blake, afterwards Dean of Wells, wrote, many years later, when sending me a testimonial:

I should expect that his remarkable skill in composition distinguishes him still.

This, with other complimentary allusions to myself, which it is needless to mention.

Now comes the tragedy—for if I ever loved anything in literary work it was the writing of Latin verses, and I was a real craftsman at it. I don't mind saying so, for, after all, what did it amount to, much though I thought of it then, as did Dr Jex-Blake, who taught me to fairly delight in the rhythm and poise of Latin words?

We come now to my examination for Mods. at Oxford in 1872, and I suppose there never was anyone more certain to get a First than I was, but, whoever you are, you must, of course, do all your papers properly.

The one absolutely convincing paper I could have done was the Latin Verse one, which confronted us at 2.30 P.M. on the 29th May 1872. It was the Derby Day, and Prince Charlie, son of my beloved Blair Athol, was running. He had won the 2000 Guineas and—well, I know I was a fool—but I could write no Latin verses while thinking about what was going on at Epsom, and I left the room within the first hour to find what had won the Derby. Not only had Prince Charlie not won, but he was unplaced, and it was indeed pain and grief to me to know I could not go back into the examination room and tackle those Latin verses.

That is how I got only a Second in Mods.

CHAPTER I

Early Days and Antecedents—Curiosities of Kilvington—The Drink Habit—How the Church was run—The wonderful new Rector—What he thought of me—Death of the Prince Consort

A FEW brief personal details may be necessary, though they are not interesting. I was born at Kilvington, near Thirsk, on 30th April 1851. My father, the late John Pick Allison, was the son, by a second marriage, of William Allison of Foxbury, in the north of Yorkshire, who was born so long ago as 1766. I never saw my grandfather, but he must have been a courageous man, for he was fifty-two when he married my grandmother, who was a maiden lady of forty-three. She was a Miss Pick, of the family whose name is familiar in connection with early turf records. My father was the only child of this marriage, but there was a considerable family by the first marriage of my grandfather. These, as the manner is, regarded the second marriage unfavourably, and my father and his mother had a bad time of it when the old man died.

It would be needless to dilate on this point, but I have come across a letter written to my father by the Rev. Mr Heslop, of Forcett, near Richmond, on 6th December 1853, in reference to the death of his uncle, Henry Allison, of Foxgrove, and this not only illuminates the position, but is of considerable general interest as a sample of old-time correspondence.

That Mr Heslop was an old man at the time of the letter is obvious from the handwriting and from the constant employment of capitals for all the nouns that he uses. His thoughts and style are almost of the eighteenth century, but he was clearly a staunch champion of my

father, and I have verified the reference that the funeral of Henry Allison was at Stanwick Church on the date named. As to any thought of legacy-hunting, so far as "Uncle Harry" was concerned, I quote the following extract from a letter written by my father to my mother before they were married:—

I have received a letter from my brother's clerk this morning, and he says that my old Uncle Harry is seriously ill. It is lucky I did not go to see him, as he would have thought I had gone for what I could get in the shape of a legacy, which anyhow he will *never* leave me.

FORCETT, *Dec. 6th* 1853.

MY DEAR SIR,

I received your letter of the 3rd Instant; and not doubting but that the entry of your Uncle's Death having taken Place, as represented in *The Yorkshire Gazette*, would be communicated to you by your Relatives at White House as correct, and that you would have an early Invitation to attend his Funeral to-day, the 6th, at St John's, I thought it unnecessary to trouble you with an earlier answer, in the Hope of seeing you after the Interment of the Corpse. As however the Funeral has taken Place to-day, and you have not called here after the Interment, I begin to apprehend that, for some cause or other, you may not have been asked to attend. If this Liberty of attending your Uncle's Funeral have not been granted you by your Brothers and Sisters to see your Father's Brother laid in his grave, it is a Proof of an unfeeling Heart and of an uncharitable Disposition. Tho' it may perhaps have entered their minds that your steady and upright Conduct might induce your Uncle to leave *you* a Legacy, which would reduce *theirs*; yet, tho' *you* do not stand in *Need* of such a Legacy, it shows in *them* an avaricious and overbearing Disposition. Your chief wish, I feel assured, has been to pay due Respect to the memory of the Deceased, your Father's Brother, by wishing to see him laid in his grave, and if you have been denied this Privilege by your Brothers' and Sisters' Neglect or want of Prudence in giving you an opportunity to do it, they have shown no marks to you of brotherly or sisterly Feelings.

I, at the desire of your Uncle, visited him and read Prayers to him a few Days before his Death, and being composed and sensible, he seemed much comforted. On the Day of his Death I likewise was on my Road to visit him, but when I had proceeded a little Way beyond East Layton, I got to hear that he was no more, and therefore I returned Home again. In consequence, I suppose,

of my having visited him, I received an Invitation to attend his Funeral on Tuesday, the 6th Instant, at half-past 9 o'clock, but being unwell, I sent a note to the Executors (whose names I at present know not) to desire they would excuse my absence, for the above Reason.

The Procession I viewed as it passed through this village to the Church at Stanwick, the Place of Interment. There was a great number of Carriages, and many of the neighbouring farmers on Horse Back, in the Rear.

I should be much grieved to hear that you have been deprived (by the absence of an Invitation to the Funeral from your Relatives at White House) from attending to pay your last Respects to the memory of your Uncle.

Whatever offence you may have given them, and I feel assured you know of none, it would not justify them on this occasion to prevent you from following the Remains of your dear Father's Brother to their earthly Place of Rest. Such conduct on their Part, if known to the public, will to *them* bring Disgrace but to *you*, under such Treatment, it will gain you Sympathy as well as Esteem.

Let this be your consolation—that you have endeavoured to live with them on the Terms of brotherly Love, and if they think that you have occasion for their Assistance, at any Time, to cause you to submit to their ill Treatment, then, to convince them, by your reputable station in Life, that you have no need of their Assistance, but rather of their manifesting a more friendly Spirit to you.

I was truly sorry to hear of poor Mrs Rhodes' sudden Death. The Fit must have been brought on, I think, by her being agitated at the parting with her son. She was an amiable and good woman and I trust her soul is in the Fruition of Celestial Rest and Happiness.

It will give me great Pleasure to see you if you have business which may call you this way. My Daughter begs to join me in kind regards to yourself and Mrs Allison.

I remain, my dear sir, most faithfully yours,

WM. HESLOP.

Within a year of the above letter my father obtained advancement in his profession, as shown by the following extract from a letter to my mother:

THIRSK, *2nd Oct.* 1854.

The Magistrates have given me the appointment of Clerk—not the firm—me alone. They all came to the office, and Lord Greenock spoke for them. The duties to commence after the next Quarter Sessions. J. P. A.

The half brothers and sisters of my father were all fairly opulent, but he had to "fend" for himself, and fortunately he was a very able, resolute man. He became a solicitor, and at quite an early age had a thriving business in Thirsk, his partner being Mr Joseph Arrowsmith, of whom more anon. I have come across an old letter of my father's written to my mother before they were married. I would not for worlds quote it here except just one passage, which shows the manner of man he was. Referring to a recent meeting, he says :

> It made me almost fancy I was in the blissful region of a happier and less troubled world than this. But it was only transitory, and as I drew nearer to home, I remembered that I was but a poor and anxious being, tossed about on the ocean of life, full of cares and liable to sorrows. Nevertheless, I have so far managed to get on smoothly and the doing what is right to the best of my ability encourages in me a hope that fortune will still retain me as one of her favourites.

The above reads somewhat stilted in these days, but it was written in the early forties, and it rings true.

I used to think that he preferred my sister to me. Very likely he did, for she was four years older and more interesting, but that he thought something of me is shown by the following curious letters—he very seldom wrote to me at all :—

THIRSK, 12*th May* 1865.

MY BOY,

What ails you ? Write. D.

All the pets are well.

This was when I was at my preparatory school at Rugby, and I must have been busy over some examination and neglected to write home, for I find the following letter written ten days later :—

THIRSK, 22*nd May* 1865.

BOY,

Go on, but don't work the brain too much. You do not know how pleased we are at your success.

You will soon be home again and there are plenty of rabbits and fish. Tom wants the rabbits and fish killed, but we will keep them back. John has become a Teetotaller. The new horse goes on very well.

We are very busy with the forthcoming election. There is to be such a row. Jessica, Tompkins and all the rest send their remembrances, and this is from D.

Do you want anything ?

Jessica and Tompkins, I need hardly say, were two of "the pets" already referred to. "Tom" was the village tailor and general factotum. He used from my very earliest days to accompany me shooting and fishing. He made my father his first pair of trousers, and he also made mine. He was seldom sober. His name was Palliser, and I have seen in the records of the Kilvington Church Registry that a Thomas Pallacere inhabited Kilvington in the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

"John" was one John Stillingfleet, who served as a groom-gardener, and was also much addicted to drink, but, being unable to live up to the standard of Tom Palliser, appears to have sworn off altogether at the time when my father wrote.

As a matter of fact, sober men in the North Riding were very exceptional at that period. Among my earliest recollections is hearing the farmers and others driving home from Thirsk market on Monday evenings. They used to drive or ride full gallop through Kilvington, all drunk, and shouting at the top of their voices. None, so far as I know, ever came to grief.

My mother's maiden name was Whytehead, and her family has been for very many years well known in Yorkshire, as also, before that, in Hampshire. It is described even in *Fuller's Worthies* as "an ancient and worshipful family," and I suppose, therefore, I may fairly claim a Bruce Lowe "figure." I have many of my mother's letters, but, beautiful as some of them are, I cannot bring myself to publish a single line of them.

She was always my champion, even when, in earliest

days, my father had carried me off, screaming and kicking, to be put to bed for having swung a tame rabbit of my sister's round by the tail. I well deserved more severe punishment, and I remember the occasion, though I cannot have been more than six years old, but my mother, who was away at the time in the village, was most indignant when she returned, and at once had me retrieved from bed and sent off on the donkey to Thirsk to buy sweets. This will give some idea as to the method of my rearing, and will throw a first light on after results which the anti-racing cranks naturally ascribe to racing alone.

Kilvington in the "fifties" was a strange place indeed. The little old church was very primitive. The floor was earth, and a plank up the aisle enabled the congregation to make their way to their seats. Bones sometimes flew out on each side of the plank as a brisk walker stepped along. The rector's name was Henson, and he had married his cook. We, through some privilege, had a box pew in the chancel, and immediately opposite it was a similar pew, called the "singing-pew." This was never occupied except when the time came for a psalm or hymn to be sung. Then the Parish Clerk, Tommy Ware, a large and ponderous man, used to quit his place under the reading-desk and proceed to this pew, accompanied by three or four men of the congregation. No women or boys were allowed in the pew. A barrel organ stood in the chancel, in the middle of the aisle, not six yards from the altar. It played about twelve tunes, and another large man, named Joe Morrell, used to walk from his place to play it. Tommy Ware read loudly the first line of each verse, thus:

"Aa-waake, ma sowl, and with the Sun"!

and then they would all go off in unison at the top of stentorian voices to the end of that verse, accompanied by the barrel organ. Then came a pause for the reading of another line, and at the conclusion Tommy Ware would

step out of the singing-pew, hymn-book in hand, while still bringing out the last note, his mouth open so wide and square that, as my father used to say, you could throw a brick into it. I can see him now as he appeared on those occasions, for he was within a yard or two of our pew.

Mr Henson died, and was succeeded, in 1859, by the Rev. William Towler Kingsley, B.D., one of the most remarkable men of the past century, and he was over one hundred and one years of age when he died, on 3rd July 1916.

Kilvington is a College living and Mr Kingsley was a Fellow of Sydney Sussex College, Cambridge. He was like a fish out of water at first in Kilvington, but he did away with the barrel organ forthwith and Tommy Ware had to sing as best he could without it. The good man knew the tunes of the old organ, but he was never quite sure of the verse metre that would fit them, and often I have heard him start a tune that overlapped, so to speak. Then he would stop and say: "Noa, that wean't do. We mun hev a fresh go!"

Another tune from the limited repertory would then be tried, probably with success.

In due course, the village blacksmith, Bob Gowland, a burly man who played the clarionet, was admitted to the singing-pew to give them a lead, and after the reading of the first line he would sound the keynote, and then accompany them with elaborate flourishes, which we used to hear him practising outside his cottage on Saturday nights. Like the other inhabitants, he was given to drink, but that was thought nothing to his discredit in those days.

I have stated above that Mr Kingsley was a remarkable man, and so he was. Had he not been very deaf, there was no limit to what he might have done. It has been written of him by one who knew him well: "He was of the sort that *does* things; not of the talking crew. He was a true artist and did nothing that he did not do well. His practical efficiency was amazing. He was a fisherman

who could make his own rods, as well as tie his own flies. He was a sailor who could build his own boats and sail them, not on a pond, but in the Portugal seas or round Achill. He was a carpenter who could finish his own village school floor or build the organ in his church. He was a carver in wood who could temper his own tools, and did so by the dining-room fire. He was a practical gardener who knew all there is to know about grafting. He was a mathematician of the old type, interested mainly in perspective, and other departments of accurate draughtsmanship, which he made very useful to the British Army in the early days of big guns at Woolwich and Shoeburyness. He was a science man of the old days, when there were few books and little apparatus. He was one of the earliest examiners (1858) for the Natural Science Tripos, which started in 1851. He was an enthusiastic daguerreotypist, and was one of the first star-photographers. I understand he was the very first person to photograph on to a block, for engraving and publication in a book."

The above and much else is perfect truth about this extraordinary man, who was a cousin of Charles Kingsley, and an intimate friend of John Ruskin and J. W. M. Turner.

I have always regretted that my father did not live long enough really to appreciate him, but it is easy to understand how a college don of abnormal abilities, dumped suddenly down in a village like Kilvington, would not at first quite hit it off with a man who had until then been supreme in the little community.

One occasion of annoyance I remember well, when Mr Kingsley took it into his head that he would like to give my sister and myself gratuitous tuition in the mornings. We had up to that point been taught by a governess, but this offer was naturally enough accepted, and I can recall the period when this teaching used to go on, for one morning my mother, who had been to Thirsk, came into the Rectory, while we were being taught, with the

news that the Prince Consort was dead. That was on 14th December 1861.

Mr Kingsley preferred girls to boys, and he persuaded himself that he could make my sister read Homer and attain to other lengths of erudition; but for me he at that time had not much use, and across some feeble exercise which I had perpetrated he wrote: "CARELESS AND AS BAD AS CAN BE," in blue pencil. "Take that," said he, "and show it to your father!" I did so, and my father was extremely incensed—not with me, but with Mr Kingsley.

The time came, in later life, when the good old Rector knew me and I him for what we were really worth—not much in my case, perhaps, but a bit more than his blue pencil observation had suggested. It is not ten years since he drove me from Kilvington Rectory to Thirsk station, with an old chestnut horse, and said, as I looked at it: "This is *not* Blair Athol!"

CHAPTER II

The Treaty of Paris and Death of the Prince Consort—Malt Liquor, Port, and Agricultural Work—Mr Arrowsmith and Squire Bell—A Hustings Episode—"Sammy" Cass—The Great Mr Rhodes—Tim Whiffler at Thirsk—Thirsk Races—The Hunt Cup—Martin Gurry wins on Catalogue—Village Idiots at Kilvington

I HAVE told of my recollection of the death of the Prince Consort, but I can go back a good deal further than that, as in the case of Vatican recorded in the Prologue.

The Treaty of Paris, after the Crimean War, was signed on 30th March 1856. News did not travel quite so rapidly then as now, but whenever this news reached Yorkshire I and the late Sir Charles Dodsworth, both of about the same age, were digging in the sands at Redcar, and there was suddenly much gun-firing at Hartlepool, in celebration of the peace. We thought it was the Russians coming and fled to our respective nurses.

I was a horribly nervous, delicate wretch in those times, and probably owe much to this day to old Dr Ryott, of Thirsk, who was quite a marvel for the "grand manner" and much common-sense, though troubled with no superfluity of science. "Give the boy plenty of good malt liquor," he used to say, "and a glass of good Port in the middle of the morning."

His advice was followed scrupulously, both at home and when I went to school.

Another trusty friend who helped materially to build me up was Tommy Wright, the landlord of the "Old Oak Tree Inn" at Kilvington. He was one of my father's best tenants, and held a good deal of the land. He was one of the sort rarely met with now, a real expert in

agricultural labour. For topping up, "skirting" and thatching a haystack; for laying a fence well and truly, or for in any other way doing the best possible in farming work, Tommy Wright was a champion, and I used to be allowed to spend whole days with him. He taught me to plough, with an old horse called Clicker, and another, until I could drive a straight furrow and turn them and the plough at the end of it. I could top-and-tail turnips as well as anybody, and then there was the dear delight of hay-making, and the harvest, with the joys of "allowance" time, when the beer cans used to be seen coming, and the baskets of bread and cheese, with white napery about them. The beer was drunk out of tin mugs or horns, and the bread and cheese was taken anyhow, but I have never liked any other food or drink so well.

Tommy Wright had a young son, Jack, a great friend of mine, whom my father later on took into his office as a junior clerk, but somehow sedentary life did not suit him, and he died quite young.

At that period there used to be cricket on the village green on Sunday afternoons—but not, I think, after Mr Kingsley took charge.

These details, trifling as they are, may serve to give some slight impression of the place and period, but as to racing I must note here that my father was not given that way. He was a first-rate shot as men used to shoot in those days, over dogs, and a skilled fisherman, but racing was left to his more opulent half-brothers, of whom Tom Allison, of White House, in North Yorkshire, had some success. His colours were scarlet and white cap. Lord Carnarvon now has the same, with the addition of a blue collar.

Then, too, Mr Arrowsmith, my father's partner, not only raced but bred bloodstock. Two of his winners, Carlton and Trepan, I very well remember, though he did not race them in his own name, but in that of Mr "J. Anderson." Trepan, foaled in 1856, won twice at Thirsk in 1859. He was by Flatcatcher out of Jane Eyre

by Jerry, and his younger brother, foaled 1858, was called Mr Rarey.

These horses used to be kept most of their time at Sowerby and worked on Thirsk race-course, under the supervision of James Ayton, who, on the death of Tommy Ware, became Parish Clerk at Kilvington. Such were "training-grooms" in those days.

Nor was that all, for the late Squire F. Bell, of Thirsk, who also bred not a few good horses there, had some of them trained on Thirsk race-course by his coachman, Swallwell—possibly not up to racing point. I remember having seen Attaché working there, and he won the Hunt Cup at Ascot in 1866 as a four-year-old, but that was when Mr J. Angell owned him. He was by Saunterer out of La Victime by Flatcatcher, her dam La Femme Sage by Gainsborough. This was an old Thirsk breed, for La Femme Sage was owned by the better-known John Bell, the predecessor of F. Bell at the Hall, Thirsk. Perhaps the best horse Mr F. Bell ever bred was Kaleidoscope, who was sold as a yearling by the executors, and I, who was there, was one of the last bidders for him—but that is another and later story.

An earlier produce of Kaleidoscope's dam was Lingerer, by Loiterer, and I saw him run at Thirsk for the Mowbray Stakes, when Syrian won, the same year that Scarrington won the Hunt Cup, ridden by Tom Spence, who is, I hope, still alive.

Mr Arrowsmith possessed a mare who used to be spoken of almost with reverence as "the Venison Mare," so great was the fame of Venison blood at that time. She was out of Sally Warfoot by Defence, and it was from her that he bred, in 1858, Carlton by Turnus. His naming of the Flatcatcher colt out of Jane Eyre, foaled that same year, Mr Rarey, was doubtless to show his opinion of the horse-taming "boom," which Rarey had about that time created.

It amuses me even now to think of Mr Arrowsmith, a very florid, middle-sized, round-faced man, with jay-

blue eyes, and a most kindly expression. "Florid," perhaps, is hardly the adjective, for there was a tracery of blue veins amid the rubicund hue of his face. This was very notably adverted to once on a time when an election was impending, and the candidates, Sir William Gallwey, who always was the sitting member, and Sir Harcourt Johnstone (later Lord Derwent) were on the hustings. My father and his partner were always the Conservative agents, and on this particular occasion some very important member of the party had come down specially to speak.

It was market day, so there was a good audience, but it was raining, and the chief topic of the moment was boring to a degree—something about Denominational Education. The great man held forth at considerable length on this, and Mr Arrowsmith was standing by him on the hustings.

Suddenly there came a voice from the crowd:

"Ho'd thy noise, man, and let ord Brandy-feeace have a go!"

The effect of this was astonishing, for the speaker absolutely broke down in his carefully prepared statistics. He finished as hastily as he could: but not all the vociferous calls for "Brandy-feeace!" could draw a speech from Mr Arrowsmith.

Ultimately, arguments turned on the everlasting big and little loaf, of which samples were carried about on poles. They were torn down by the respective partisans and mopped in rain and mud, then hurled up at the hustings, one such missile hitting Mr Arrowsmith full in the face and bursting innocuously over it, except for befoulment.

All these things I saw and delighted in. Needless to say, we were always on the side of Sir William Gallwey, the Conservative member, and he was never beaten, though there was a time when he got in by one vote. There was real sport in those elections.

Mr Arrowsmith used to dine with us at home every Christmas Day, and, as he came in, he gave my sister and

myself half-a-sovereign each. This was very welcome while we were children, but there came a time when we began to feel ourselves too old for this sort of thing, and, curiously enough, the same idea seemed to have occurred to the old gentleman, for he came one Christmas without his ten shillings presents, and I think we were not altogether pleased with the omission.

Another sportsman of Thirsk was "Sammy" Cass, the brewer, but inasmuch as he was the wrong side in politics, he was outside the pale. He was really a good sportsman, however, and used to ride his own horses at Thirsk races—I well remember one called the Jew, on whom he won the North Riding Farmers' Hunt Cup of two and a half miles in 1864, having won it the year before on Sky Rocket. "Sammy Cass wins on the Jew!" still rings in my memory as a race-course cry, for he won again on the Jew in 1865, after something that finished in front of him had been disqualified and the owner warned off.

Mr Cass owned greyhounds of repute, and won a Waterloo Cup, but it so happened that some of his greyhounds, out at exercise, went for a little pet dog of ours called Bosky, and the end of that may be imagined. The idea that such a dreadful thing should have been done by the greyhounds of a political adversary was almost intolerable, and I wept bitterly over the death of Bosky. Yet from a Diary which I kept in 1863 the following passage shows that I had not passed beyond the primeval savage or cruel instincts with which we are all born, until education in the humanities "Emollit mores, nec sinit esse feros."

The extract is dated 22nd January 1863.

I saw a pig killed this afternoon. The first time it was struck it broke the rope and got away. It was pulled back and struck twice, and had its throat cut twice, and then was scalded to death.

Such miraculous changes come over us in process of time! for I, who would not now see a living thing hurt,

if I could help it, was clearly interested in the butchery of that pig. I remember Bob Gowland, the Kilvington blacksmith, used to be called in when a pig had to be killed, and being, as I have said, not of sober habit, he did not strike with sufficient accuracy when attempting to fell the poor brute. It is horrible to think of now, but it is a reminder of what one was.

The really great brewer, however, at Thirsk was Mr William Rhodes, a portly gentleman who was the backbone of the local Conservative party. He was a delightful old man, with a considerable family, all of whom were among our best friends. On race days at Thirsk it used to be pleasant indeed to go and lunch at the Rhodes's, and I have clearly in mind the Derby rounds of beef which were a special feature of those functions. No Conservative politician, of whatever importance, would have dreamed of going to Thirsk without, in the first place, paying his respects to Mr Rhodes.

It is strange to recall now that I, who write, saw Tim Whiffler run as a three-year-old at Thirsk in the spring of 1862, when he belonged to Jackson, and finished fourth for the Thirsk Handicap, 1 mile 6 furlongs. The race was won by Rapparee, ridden by John Osborne and carrying 8 st. 3 lb. I remember Rapparee well, a hard, wiry-looking beast, but Tim Whiffler did not impress himself on me in the same way. All the same, that was one of his two defeats out of eleven races that year. His sire, Van Galen, I used often to see as a travelling stallion when he was at Thirsk on market days. He was a dark bay or brown horse.

On the same race day when Tim Whiffler was beaten at Thirsk, Borealis, two years old, won the Mowbray Stakes, and this was her first race, she being the first foal of Blink Bonny. That day too, the Thirsk Hunt Cup, which was always the most sporting event of the meeting, was won by Sir George Strickland's Lady Bird, by King Caradoc, ridden by Mr George Thompson, beating Sir Charles Slingsby's Mousetrap (owner) and nineteen others.

They were all half-breds with hunters' certificates, and that class of race did an immense lot of good to the breed at large. The National Hunt Rules, later on, destroyed these races, and no relic of them remains except at Croxton Park, where a private sweepstake is run on the same lines.

Another old reminiscence of Thirsk races is the 1864 meeting, when I saw Hypermnestra, a four-year-old black mare, 6 st. 7 lb., win the Thirsk Handicap for the late William Anson, beating, among others, her stable companions, Bonny Bell, four years, 7 st. 3 lb., and Old Orange Girl, four years, 7 st.

Bonny Bell will always be remembered as the dam of Beauclerc, and Old Orange Girl as the dam of those lovely fillies, Madge Wildfire and Twine the Plaiden.

That same day when Hypermnestra won, "Sammy" Cass once more won the North Riding Farmers' Cup on the Jew, and the Tyro Stakes was won by Mr Leonard Peckitt's two-year-old filly, Catalogue, by Leamington, ridden by Martin Gurry. This I remember so well that I mentioned it to Gurry year before last, without ever having referred to a *Calendar*. Gurry was at that time a boy in Gregory's stable on Hambleton.

The race meeting in those days was supported entirely by local effort. The member for Thirsk used to give the Member's Plate. Aspiring politicians, on the other side, would also endow stakes, and thus it happened that the North Riding Farmers' Cup of £100 was given by Mr F. Milbank, a county candidate. It had to be won two years to retain it, but "Sammy" Cass, his chief supporter in Thirsk, managed to do that after a successful objection, as mentioned above.

Children nowadays are so old at such ages as from ten to twelve that it will seem no wonder at all when they are able, in due course, fifty years later, to tell what they did in their youth; but in my time children associated, for the most part, with children, and they did not so quickly become old-fashioned. I have mentioned taking pleasure

in seeing a pig killed, and I ought in justice to myself to add that I and my sister were very kind to two young pet porkers, whom we named "Johnny" and "Jacky."

It was a commonplace request, after doing lessons: "Please may we go and play with the pigs!"

Pigs really are intelligent if you handle them kindly, and all went well with Johnny and Jacky till they grew big, and then, whichever was mine took fright at something and knocked me over on hard cobble-stones. I was partially stunned, and the pig galloped over my prostrate body. That ended this form of amusement, and the end of the pigs was not far distant.

Ought I, perhaps, to add here that Kilvington, like other similar villages, used to possess a village idiot, a poor woman who went by the name of Silly Bessy? She wore a sort of pinafore and a nightcap, and her hands dangled from the wrists. She was perfectly harmless, but I was frightened of her. Then there was a younger reputed idiot, one Ned Sleights, a boy of ten or eleven. When Mr Kingsley came to the Rectory he tried amusing his new parishioners with sports. Among other things he got up a three-legged race for the boys, and Ned Sleights, having had a leg tied to that of another boy and been told how they were to race with others round a post and back, made this singularly sensible observation:

"And if we brek oor legs, how then?"

Mr Kingsley was so much struck by this that Ned was from that time forth encouraged to attend church and take part in the singing. He very soon took a peculiar pride in this, and once when I saw him on a Sunday afternoon and said: "Well, Ned, are you going to sing in church?" he replied, with a grin: "Aye! She'll hev te echoa te-night!"

And so it happened as a matter of fact.

It should be added here that prominent among the later singers was Joe Morrell, the sometime barrel organist of the church. He could not read and so used to bellow

the tunes in a raucous voice, deputising as best he could for the banished organ.

The time came when, thanks to Mr Kingsley, there was a really splendid organ in Kilvington Church, but that was a good deal later.

CHAPTER III

Christmas at Kilvington—Old Customs—First Visit to London—The Great Exhibition—Lord Dundreary—*The Colleen Bawn*—Early Education—Life at Cundale Parsonage—The first Ironclads—I armour-plate the *Nautilus*—"A Coursing Match"—Cruelty of Boys—Mr Gray beats us—The Making of Fairyland—A Cold-water Cure—How we celebrated the Prince of Wales's Wedding

OUR first pony was a smart little grey called Jacky, but he was far too much of a handful for a boy of eight or nine, and after he had bolted with me several times and projected me into hedges and other unpleasant places my sister obtained the monopoly of him for a year or so.

Christmas time was really great in those days: Christmas Eve, with the yule-log, yule cakes and frumenty: the "waits," of course; Christmas morning, with the children at the back door singing out:

> I wish you a Merry Kesmas and a Happy New Year,
> A pocket full of money and a barrel full of beer,
> And a good fat pig as'll fet you all t' year.
> Please will you give me my Christmas Box?

We used to be provided with copious coppers to dispense on those occasions.

Then there was church, and Tommy Ware would announce "the hymn for Kes-mas Day!"

All Christmas week was a festive time, and you could not go to any farm-house without being expected to eat cake and drink home-made wine, or, if you were older, gin and water. How strange it seems, but whisky was almost unknown then!

There were always mummers or, as they were called,

"plough stots," who used to come into the house in an evening and go through the old-world play of *St George*—of which the following lines remain in memory :—

> Here comes I who never came yet,
> With my great head and my little wit ;
> Though my head be great and my wit be small,
> I'll do my best to please you all !

I saw mummers at Rugby in the early sixties who went through the same performance with almost the same words.

Sword-dancers invariably turned up at Christmas and it was probably far more satisfactory to administer largess to people who were really doing something to amuse than in a modern Christmas week, when Christmas presents are expected by all sorts and conditions of men as a matter of course. At the time under notice, tradesmen used to send presents to their customers : all manner of things—boxes of raisins, yule candles, and I know not what—but Christmas bills were really Christmas bills then, and in the case of approved customers covered the whole year. I have often thought that Christmas bills were brought into special odium by this custom, for under present conditions a Christmas bill is really no more urgent or alarming than any other.

. . . . . .

I must not dwell unduly on these old memories, and will pass now to 1862, when I was taken on my first visit to London, Sir William Gallwey having lent us his house in Buckingham Gate, together with the servants there.

It was the Great Exhibition year, but to me the idea of a journey to London seemed something awful. Up to that time I had been accustomed to a life in which York, though not twenty miles away, seemed a very remote place, and if York had to be visited, plans had to be fully discussed for days in advance.

To go to London was a really appalling adventure, and I wept in sheer nervousness at the prospect.

However, we got there all right, but to me the horror was only multiplied, for the noise in the street caused nightmares of the most terrifying sort, and there was for the first two or three days some anxiety as to whether I should not have to be taken home.

I settled down, and in the next few weeks saw more of London than I have ever seen since. The Exhibition came first, with the big scented fountain immediately after you entered. That scent remains very familiar still. Then, not far from the entrance was a most magnificent, gilded loose-box which Colonel Townley had had made for Kettledrum, his Derby winner of the previous year.

We went to Astley's and saw Mazeppa, we went to the Haymarket and saw Sothern as Lord Dundreary; to the Zoo, British Museum, Tower of London, Hampton Court, with the Maze and monster Vine, the Crystal Palace, where Blondin was walking high up over the grounds, and I shut my eyes because his performance was unbearably dangerous. What a wonder he was, walking with a bag over his head and baskets on his feet, pretending to slip and half fall! It is very strange, but there has never been but one Blondin, nor anyone with pretensions to rival him. Even more strange is it that after he had retired for a number of years and lost his money by an ill-advised investment in Honduras bonds, he came out again with the same absolute nerve control as he had in his early career. There are many who must have seen him at the Westminster Aquarium in this later stage, and no one else was ever allowed to ropewalk there without a net below.

The Colleen Bawn was another of the plays which my first visit to London recalls, but Sothern as Lord Dundreary is the best-remembered character, with Buxton pressing him somewhat closely. I was much interested in the Royal horses when they came out for exercise from the Buckingham Palace stables, the house we were in commanding a full view of such proceedings. No doubt

we had a very good time, though I was not quite old enough to appreciate it.

Is my educational process in the slightest degree interesting to a living soul but myself? I doubt it, but to show what manner of boy I was I don't mind stating that the first adventure in getting me taught away from home was at the day school of a gaunt pedagogue called Nicholson, who had his schoolroom closely adjacent to Mr Rhodes's house. He was a man with a bald, bright head, and very sharp-looking eyes. He used to sit at a desk with a cane of average size, and one very long one, with which he could hit boys in all parts of the room without moving from his place. He never menaced me in this way and I was located at a table by myself on the left hand of him, but I was a boy such as, at present, I should despise, for I was ridiculously nervous and used to burst into tears if he even looked at me. This method of teaching was found to be hopeless, and Mr Nicholson was engaged to come in the afternoons to Kilvington and do what he could in the way of private teaching: even so, I was an impossible subject until he had led off with a game of draughts or something of the sort, and gradually slid into education. It seems absurd, but it is true, and so I record the fact. I can see Mr Nicholson, even now, walking home after such a lesson, carrying a brace of partridges, which were the frequent perquisites of my tuition. He taught me the origin of the word whisky, and a hairdresser, who used to cut my hair, gave early object lessons in the use of rum.

A little rum, he used to say, was the best possible stimulant for the scalp, and being provided with rum he would pour it into the full palm of one hand then pass that hand with an ecstatic suck past his mouth and apply the relics of rum to my head. This he would do two or three times, to his own very great satisfaction.

These seem to be mere trifles, but inasmuch as they are also truths of a long past day, they may perhaps possess some little interest even now.

The time came when I went really from home, and this was into the charge of the Rev. Samuel Gray, at Cundale Parsonage, which is only about nine miles from Thirsk.

Mr Gray was a tall young man, something of the Mr Barlow type, but more sensible. His wife was a daughter of Callcott, the artist, and the only other boy committed to Mr Gray's control was her young brother Bob, about the same age as myself. It was in 1862 that I went to Cundale, and Mr Gray's system of dealing with us was certainly good, for much of his teaching is fresh in my memory still. With him I soon lost all nervousness. He had a judicious method of leading you up to your work. I quote an illustration of this very briefly from an old diary which I kept in the early part of 1863:

23rd Feb. 1863.

This morning, after lessons, we had a paper chase. In the afternoon we had English history, writing and compo. Then Mr Gray, Bob and I went out for another paper-chase. I went to Mr Appleton's and got buried in the straw. This evening we did our French lessons and then played at Family Coach.

4th March.

This morning we went to the sale for the Lancashire people. It did not commence until the afternoon. I bought two pictures and two book markers. This evening there was a Bran pie, for which we had to pay 3d. a dip. I got a kettleholder and a pin-cushion. Bob and I rode a donkey home.

However charitably inclined, I appear to have had an eye to business even at that period, for the very next day, 5th March 1863, comes the entry:

This morning I got the prize for Cæsar, half-a-crown. I also sold a picture for 1s. which I bought for 3d.

Mr Gray had really an extraordinary capacity for interesting one, whether in work or play, and among other good schemes he used to make us go out into the hall and read aloud to him while he sat in a room out of sight.

The point was that we should make him hear every word, and many are the parsons who would do well to practise elocution under similar conditions.

The above allusion to "the Lancashire people" touches the distress among the cotton operatives, in consequence of the American War, and it may be added here that I have to thank Mr Gray for what is now a useful habit—viz. that I want no sugar in tea or coffee. He told us at the time under notice that it would be good for us to deny ourselves something for the benefit of the Lancashire people, and if we would do without sugar in tea or coffee, he would give us each sixpence a week to send to the fund which was being raised for these poor people. We agreed to do so, and the result was that after taking tea without sugar for a fortnight, nothing would have induced me to take sugared tea again, but I never told Mr Gray this, and continued to draw sixpence a week for the Lancashire operatives as long as I remained with him. The merest suspicion of sugar in tea is hateful to me to-day.

It may as well be mentioned that the extracts from my diary are not in any way corrected for publication, so that I evidently could spell all right when eleven years old, but here comes a letter to my sister written from Cundale in 1862, and it should be explained that I had always not only had a craving for the sea but had developed no mean skill in making models of ships: my *chef d'œuvre* was a vessel 2 ft. 6 in. long, rigged as a brig, and called the *Nautilus*. She was a two-decker, and carried twenty-four brass guns, which could really be fired, and when these were all loaded, with a pellet in each, and connected with a long piece of touch-paper gummed across them, it used to be pleasant to send the vessel sailing on a duck pond to fire intermittently at the ducks. Now mark this extract from the letter:

CUNDALE, 1862.

I am thinking of having the *Nautilus* iron-plated when I come home, for it will not only hinder her from cracking (which she seems inclined to do) but there are to be no more wooden men-of-

war to be made; those that are being made now have first an inch of iron, then fifteen inches of oak and on the outside five more inches of iron. On one of these ships at [*sic*] America there were a lot of floating batteries firing away with the largest cannons, but she passed through them without any men killed. The cannon balls smash on their sides. Mr Gray says that one of these ships could come right up to London without being hurt at all.

So I shall plate the *Nautilus*.

The vessels referred to were, of course, the *Merrimac* and *Monitor*, whose engagements during the American War caused a world-wide sensation and practically initiated the era of armour-plating. It seems strange to have lived at a time when those ships were deemed wondrous novelties and to be alive and equally interested in all manner of warships at the present day. The progress has been indeed marvellous.

The beautiful faith in Mr Gray's knowledge of naval construction and its possibilities is rather amusing.

It may seem rather incredible that at the age of eleven I should have produced anything like a decent model of a two-decker from a block of wood, but I had a good tool-chest and had spent many hours gaining knowledge of how to use it from Frank Hudson, the Kilvington village carpenter. The *Nautilus* was not an attractive model, for she was just on the lines of the bluff-bowed vessels that I saw on visits to Whitby, in the harbour there, but she was a correct brig as regards masts, sails and yards. In one of my letters from Cundale, written in 1862, it is rendered evident that the making of the *Nautilus* was wearing out my available supply of tools, for it ends thus:

When you send the magic lantern, will you send two sharp chisels, two gouges, a spokeshave and a plane?

Give my love to everybody and believe me your affectionate brother. W. A.

It is evident from an entry in the Memoranda of my Diary for 1863 that the *Nautilus* had encouraged me to

further efforts in the same direction, for this memorandum is:

Want three pieces of wood for ships.

Whether or not three more ships were constructed does not appear. Probably the American change of naval designs interfered.

We were not debarred from seeing what we could of field sports at Cundale, and in the following letter to my sister is a singularly crude, not to say brutal, description of my first experience of coursing:—

CUNDALE, 14*th February* 1863.

I wish you had been here yesterday to see a coursing match. It was such fun. The first two hares the first dog bit one of their legs in two; but falling over in a most insane manner (like Nettle over the cart rut) the second caught the hare.

But the best of all was a man whom we named Wildfire Sampson, he is rather insane at times. He rode about the field on a little pony as hard as he could, all the while shouting and yelling at anybody he came near; didn't care for any person, if they didn't choose to get out of the way he'd run over them; sometimes nearly tumbling off: always first down to the place where the hare was being killed. The common expression was "By Gor! here comes Sampson, let me be off!"

A great many hares got away. One ran so far that a dog who was chasing it lay down on the road and couldn't go any further.

The letter from which the above is extracted is dated simply "Cundale 14th," but I get the actual date from the 1863 Diary, which gives the "coursing match" as occurring on 13th February in that year.

It is clear that primitive instincts towards blood-letting and frightfulness were somewhat dominant in us then, and in confirmation of this I quote the Diary for 28th of that same February:

Bob and I went to Leckby Carr. Arminson Bland shot two sparrows whilst we were there, Bob bought them for a penny. This afternoon we had a cat hunt, and then walked to Mr Parker's stacks, and there found six small mice, which we buried, Alivo!

Manifestly, the old Adam was very powerful in us about that period, and it may have been fortunate that Mr Gray found occasion a little later to beat us both for making general hay of our bedroom and other parts of the house one evening when he and Mrs Gray were out to dinner. The beating was performed with great solemnity the following afternoon, an ordinary horsewhip being applied across the back while one was firmly held by the collar. I rather fancied myself afterwards, because Bob howled lustily and I took my share without a murmur, but it would probably have been better policy to follow Bob's example.

It is a little curious that amid the undesirable characteristics which are perhaps common to all boys I seem to have had quite other fancies, and one of these was to construct a " fairyland " on the top of the trunk of a very large old tree, whose branches were all gone, and had left quite an extensive plateau to deal with. In the same letter which describes the American ironclads there is the following passage :—

This afternoon, after a most perilous ascent, with a rope fastened to me, I reached fairyland, and I hauled up the basket a great many times full of different things, such as ivy, violet roots, stones, slates and soil. Queen Mab's cave is covered over the top with ivy and violets. It is exactly like a real cave, with lots of little passages out of it as far as you can see. It is a queer tree. When first I got up it had soil all over the top of it about a foot deep, with gooseberry bush, and some ivy, nettles and flowers on the top of it. We have cleared all the nettles away and it looks so nice already.

On Friday 6th, the next year, 1863, there is the following note in the Diary :—

This morning we learned mythology, after which we went into the garden. I climbed into fairyland.

Day-dreams are frequent enough at that time of life, and mine used to be largely inspired by the works of J. G. Edgar, such as *A Boy's Adventures in the Baron's*

Wars. The modern world then seemed dull and intolerable, the soul of chivalry and romance having departed.

Mr Gray, however, by somewhat Spartan methods, brought the realities of existence, such as it is, very clearly to our minds each morning, for it was his custom to call us himself and make one after the other sit in a bath while he poured a can of cold water down the back. This he did regardless of weather, and, no doubt, the effect was good, though the anticipation on a winter morning was unpleasant.

The marriage of the Prince and Princess of Wales was the great event of 10th March 1863, and my part in the celebration of it is recorded in the Diary, 10th March:

> This morning we went to Brafferton, Mrs Gray riding the donkey at first, but we were met by the carriage, and so I rode the donkey, which kept up with the carriage. In the afternoon we had a procession round the town, me among the number. In the evening we had a magic lantern and fireworks. We all sang *God Save the Queen*. There were flags out of all the windows.

Some few weeks later, during the holidays, I was taken to Ripon to see the Prince and Princess drive through the town, and that was my first sight of them. Of course people were enthusiastic. How could they be otherwise over such a charming young Princess?—but loyalty to the Crown was not then nearly so deeply rooted and sincere as it is now. It was reserved for Disraeli, a good many years later, to bring home both to Queen Victoria and her people the true strength of their respective positions, which act and react for mutual dignity and co-operative power.

This Cundale period must now come to an end, though something like a Sandford and Merton book could be written about it. All concerned have passed out of my ken, and I have never seen Bob Callcott again. Mr Gray migrated to the living of Pateley Bridge. I went home, and next term to Coxwold Vicarage.

CHAPTER IV

Life at Coxwold Vicarage—My Welsh Tutor—His strange Methods of Teaching—I myself set up as a Teacher—No Dissent at Coxwold—Racing Associations—The Coxwold Derby Sweep (Macaroni's Year)—Failure to see Tom King—Early Shooting—My First Partridge—Mr Kingsley and the Kites—The Kite String and the Magistrate's Hat—My Fear of that Magistrate—*Tom Brown's Schooldays* sends me to Rugby

COXWOLD is a delightful old village and was much more in the world than Kilvington or Cundale. This may have been due to the close proximity of Newburgh Priory, where Sir George and Lady Julia Wombwell used to entertain considerable house parties, the Duke of Cambridge being a frequent guest, and other such celebrities as Maria Marchioness of Ailesbury were among the regular visitors. Needless to say, when these appeared in church on Sundays they gave the gossips of the village infinite food for conversation, and when the vicar, the Rev. George Scott, joined the shooting-parties and went to dinner with the notables, it can be well understood that his family gave him no peace until he told them all about everything, for, I should explain, he had six daughters as well as his good wife. There were also three sons, the eldest of whom, Tom, was about four and a half years my senior, but backward in education, and a curate had been engaged to act also as private tutor to Tom and the second son, Mainwaring. Somehow it was arranged that I should go to Coxwold to have the advantage of this tutor, a Welshman named Williams, who was a really good sort, and I learned a very great deal from him in little more than a year, from 1863 to Easter, 1864.

His methods of teaching were remarkable, for instead

of forbidding the use of Cribs, he actually provided us with them so that our reading of the classics might be more rapid and extensive.

This led, at first, to somewhat discouraging results, as, for instance, when I, with the assistance of Bohn, commenced translating the first Ode of Horace thus:

Mæcenas — Mæcenas, atavis — sprung, edite regibus — from ancient kings;

but that sort of fiasco was not of frequent occurrence, and I had read pretty nearly the whole of the Æneid of Virgil when I was little more than twelve years old.

Nor was it long before equally rapid strides were made in Greek, and I had mastered several Greek plays, of which the *Medea* of Euripides was one, before the end of 1863.

It is hardly conceivable that such a system of education is good, except for cramming purposes, but somehow it answered in my case, though I don't think Tom Scott derived any benefit whatever from it.

Mr Scott himself was a rare good sportsman, and as fine a shot as you could find in those days. He was a county magistrate at a time when that was some distinction, and though the good friend of all his parishioners he never worried them by parochial visitations. The old vicarage, immediately opposite the church, whose beautiful octagonal tower is something unique in the way of architecture, was formerly the village school, and the house was for the headmaster—at least, so I believe. Even in 1863 the village schoolroom remained an integral part of the vicarage, though with a separate entrance, but so casual was the teaching given there that on one occasion, when the schoolmaster, Mr Heron, was away for a few days Tom Scott and I took charge and taught the children. What we taught them, goodness knows, but we were very severe on some of the boys—that much I remember well. This might seem incredible, but it is recorded plainly enough in my Diary:

Saturday, 13th June 1863.

This morning we did our usual lessons. Mr Heron has not come back yet. Tom and I went again to teach the children.

Such a happy family was all the village of Coxwold that Mr Scott used to allow free use of this schoolroom—which was actually part of the ground floor of the vicarage—for Nonconformist services, there being no chapel in the village. There was really no Dissent, for the people used to go to church in the morning and to the schoolroom chapel in the evening. A very different spirit prevailed at Kilvington and Thirsk, where a " Methody parson " was always regarded as a man of dubious morality, and to this day I find it difficult to clear myself of an instinctive hatred of the Nonconformist conscience and all its works, this feeling having been bred in me and strengthened by early environment.

A worthy man called George Smith was the chief of such Nonconformists as there were at Coxwold, but there was no Nonconformist bitterness about him, and he and the vicar were the best of friends. George Smith was much given to recitations on the subject of temperance, one of which began :

A toper sat in a tap-room nook—
He was cheerful, vivacious and gay.
He had two pounds ten in his pocket just then—
He had pawned his watch that day !

Suicide was the ultimate fate of the toper, and when the " startled neighbours," hearing the shot, rushed to see what had happened they found nothing in cupboard or pantry but

One half-empty cup of cider,

which the toper, it would seem, had been unable to finish before shooting himself. He cannot have been such a desperate toper if cider was his beverage, but George Smith thought nothing of that. Anything alcoholic was in his view equally pernicious. He was a

good, kindly man, but with many narrow scruples of conscience. Thus when the vicar once sent him a brace or two of partridges, he returned them with many thanks, but said he felt bound to "abstain from things strangled and from blood," as enjoined by the Bible, and he understood that partridges were not bled when killed.

For the most part Coxwold was a very sport-loving village, and almost any of the old inhabitants could talk with intimate knowledge of north-country horses, especially those that were or had been trained on Hambleton, not more than five miles away. The Stebbing brothers had not a few classic winners there, though according to William Day they did not make the best of their opportunities. Knight of St George, Flatcatcher, Alice Hawthorn, Kingston, and even Velocipede were at some time or another trained on Hambleton, and it was an easy journey to go from Coxwold by Oldstead and up Oldstead bank, on the side of which there is the big white horse that is visible from the North-Eastern main line between York and Thirsk. On the top of Oldstead bank you are within half-a-mile of the Hambleton Hotel and close to the training gallops that were. Small wonder then that Coxwold people had many training reports to discuss, and the village cronies at the Fauconberg Arms always turned to racing as their favourite topic. Scurr, the landlord, was quite a sound judge of form, but the great authority of the village was Savage, the painter and decorator. In the year 1863 there was a Coxwold half-crown sweep on the Derby, and to the best of my recollection this was my first venture in a speculation of the sort. The subscribers were numerous, and I was so far fortunate that I drew a runner—viz. the Gillie—who finished fifth. The newspaper reports said he "showed temper" in the last furlong, and I solaced myself with the belief that but for his infirmity of temper he would have won. Doubtless he had no earthly chance of beating Macaroni or Lord Clifden. It was the year when Sweetmeat blood was in the ascendant, for there were many other first-class sons of Sweetmeat besides Macaroni.

Saccharometer was one of them, and Carnival another. Many were the regrets expressed at that time that Sweetmeat had been expatriated, and these were renewed some years later when Sweetmeat's son Parmesan sired Favonius and Cremorne.

We did pretty much as we liked at Coxwold out of school hours. There was an old chestnut pony which I used to ride, and Tom had another mount. We used to race these animals whenever opportunity arose, much after the fashion of Benjamin and his friend exercising Mr Jorrocks's hunters. Then too we were interested in pugilism, as is shown by the Diary for 16th June 1863:

> This morning we did our usual lessons, and then went and talked with Billy Bowser about Tom King, who was coming in a Circus to Easingwold. At night we went there, did not see Tom King and got very wet.

There is a world of disappointment in the above record, for Easingwold is five or six miles from Coxwold.

Before this time, when I was no more than ten years old, my father had taken a great deal of trouble in teaching me how to handle and load a muzzle-loading gun with safety, in any event, to myself and others. I never forgot those lessons, and whatever may have been my proficiency as a game shot, I can say without fear of contradiction that I have never caused the slightest feeling of apprehension to anyone who has been shooting with me. So thoroughly was I grounded in this respect that I was allowed to go out with an old single-barrel muzzle-loader, with half charges, to shoot fieldfares or rabbits. I find, in the Diary for 2nd January 1863:

> Out shooting this morning at Davison's, and killed three. They let me shoot at the pigeons.

This was really an iniquitous proceeding, for the farmer's wife, Mrs Davison, had expressed doubt as to my capacity to hit anything, and I offered her sixpence to

let me have a shot at the pigeons. She accepted the offer, and I waited till a number of pigeons were on the roof of one of the buildings and fired into the midst of them. My recollection is that five were killed, but the diary says three—anyhow I went home in triumph with the spoils, but was not commended for what I had done.

That same year I was out with the gun and accompanied by an old servant of ours, Mary Ridsdale by name—I suppose it was thought I needed looking after. I marked a blackbird into a hedge and went there to kick it up. There was a scurry of wings as a bird suddenly rose and flew away. I fired at it almost automatically, and down it came. Not till then did I see that it was a partridge. Moreover, I had no game certificate and it was not the shooting season. Various men with carts were passing on the road hard by. Worst of all, the partridge was a runner and we had no dog with us.

I felt I had committed some awful crime, and so did Mary Ridsdale. The game laws were really serious in those days, and I fully believed that the men on the road would inform the police about what they had seen. All the same I went back to the village and found Tom Palliser, who chanced to be sober, and told him about the partridge, whereupon he went with me and a useful terrier to the fatal spot. The terrier hunted up and down the nearest ditch and soon found the bird, which we took home, but Tom Palliser meanly told my father the story, and as a result I was informed, just before going to bed, that a policeman had come inquiring for me. This I implicitly believed, but was soon put out of my misery. It is a trivial story, but it is that of my first partridge, and I suppose it is ordinary human weakness that causes me to dwell on such a subject.

My alarm at the prospect of being brought before the Thirsk magistrates for shooting the partridge had been considerably increased by the fact that the chairman of those magistrates, a somewhat pompous gentleman named Lloyd, had been much incensed a week or two earlier

by having his top hat pulled off by a string which reached from hedge to hedge across a road and just caught the hat as he was riding home from his magisterial duties. This was in fact the ultimate string of three kites which I and another boy had been flying, under the instructions of Mr Kingsley, the Kilvington rector. The first kite was six feet high, and when that had carried out as much string as it could support, the string was fastened to the back of a seven-foot kite, which again took out a goodly length of thicker string. Then came the eight-foot kite, to the back of which the second line was attached, and we had stout whipcord on a sort of windlass, made something like the reel of a fishing-rod, and with legs driven deep into the ground to enable us to control the whole three. In this way we used to fly the first kite almost out of sight, but on the occasion in question the wind was strong and a weak spot had developed in our last line of whipcord, which gave way, and of course we had to pursue the kites across country. As ill luck would have it, the line crossed the road where Mr Lloyd was trotting jauntily home, and, as I have said, it caught his top hat, which fell clattering in the road just as I and my friend came up on the track of the string.

We were quick enough to drop flat on the other side of the hedge, while the great man dismounted, using anything but magisterial language, and recovered his much-damaged hat. We lay there quaking while he seized on the string and began hauling in the slack from the broken side, throwing it in a tangled mass over the far-side hedge as he did so. There was at least a quarter of a mile of string for him to deal with in this way, and it took him fully ten minutes to get to the end of it where the break had been. He then remounted and rode on his way, feeling, no doubt, that he had done his duty, and we lay there all the time undiscovered : but I told my father about it all, and he told Mr Lloyd, who, doubtless, only laughed, but to me it was represented that the great man had ascertained by secret agency who had done him

this despite and that his anger against me was terrible. Hence my fear at the bare idea of going before him for shooting a partridge.

Mr Kingsley, to whom we owed the idea of kite-flying, was even then experimenting with kites for military purposes. He was really a wonder, as anyone who ever knew him will agree, and there were few things that he could not actually do.

Thus, in our case, he arranged all the details of making an icehouse, and levelling a croquet lawn—no difficult matter, of course, for those who understand such jobs; but he understood pretty nearly everything.

Enough, however, and perhaps too much of these early trifles. I come now to the time when I went to Rugby, *Tom Brown's Schooldays* being the direct cause of that choice.

CHAPTER V

Oakfield House Preparatory School—Mr J. M. Furness and the Canes—"Mother" Davidson—Port and Bread and Butter—Concerning Rugby Football—The Hacking Game—I get used to it—"Louts" and Rows with them—Harry Verelst and the Snowball—I see a Man in the Stocks—Why not Stocks for Conscientious Objectors?—The French Master and his painful Books—Head of the School—Effects of Get-learning-quick Tuition—Mat. Furness—"Having it Down"—Departure to the Big School

AFTER Easter, 1864, I was taken by my mother to Rugby, where we spent a night at the George Hotel, and went the next morning to see Mr Frank Kitchener, a friend of the Rhodes' family (Thirsk), who was one of the masters at the Big School and also, I believe, a near relative of Lord Kitchener that was to be. He no doubt gave useful advice as to my future, and in due course we proceeded to Oakfield House, the preparatory school over which the Rev. J. M. Furness then presided, and there I was left, but not until the matron, "Mother" Davidson, a stout, florid, comfortable old Scotchwoman, had been interviewed, and charged with many instructions as to my welfare, one of which was that I was to have a glass of Port, with bread and butter, at 11 A.M. each day. This instruction was faithfully carried out during all the time I was at Oakfield House, and I don't think I ever liked Port better than on those occasions.

It might be thought from my early and nervous beginnings, so far as schooling went, that I should have had a bad time at Oakfield House to start with, but it was not so at all, and I cannot recall that I had any trouble whatever. There were fifty or sixty boys at this school, including those from the town, and Mr Furness was, no doubt, a good and capable master: a middle-sized, wiry man, with mutton-chop whiskers inclined to bush, and a

sharp, fiery eye, which boded no good for those against whom he from time to time fulminated. If he did not box your ears, which he was very apt to do, with rapid persistency and both hands, he had a way of sending you to buy a cane for your own chastisement. This was rather a refinement of what would be now termed cruelty, but it at least gave the chance to purchase the worst possible cane, and even to insert a hair in it to make it split. Somehow—and it has always been a mystery to me why—I never incurred his wrath, or, at any rate, the practical demonstration of it. I had a charmed life, so to speak, and a proof of this was given when some ballyragging and pillow-fighting was taking place in a dormitory which others, of whom I was one, had invaded, and Mr Furness suddenly rushed in with a big shilling cane and Berserker wrath in his eyes. He laid about him with right good will on boys who, with only night-shirts on, were badly cut under really savage blows. In the course of his onrush he came upon me and I stood to receive the worst that cane could do, but he paused for a moment and said: "No, I won't hit you!" and dashed on, doing apparently indiscriminate punishment among all the others. I never learned why it was that I was spared, and I simply record the fact that I was.

It was a good sort of school as schools were in those times. There were four forms in it, the IVth being the highest, and I was provisionally put in the IIIrd, the master of which was named Lewis, but though coming in at the half term, I was soon able to outclass the company in which I found myself, and having won a prize, Sir Walter Scott's *Poems*, which I still possess and value, I proceeded into the IVth form the next term.

Oakfield House is still well known as a preparatory school for Rugby, and it has always been a good one. There you began to understand what Rugby football really was. It needed some understanding, for those were the days of the hacking game, when not only could you hack your way through a scrummage but hack over whoever

of the opponents was first on his side, and also hack over anyone running with the ball if you could not tackle him. Often and often it was a really savage game, and the sound of the hacking when a scrummage was formed was rather dreadful—as one remembers it now. Moreover, anything in the nature of a guard for the shins was anathema maranatha. I remember seeing a boy very severely beaten for being found to have stuffed copy-books inside his stockings when he played football.

Under such conditions the initiation into Rugby football was something like being under fire for the first time, and yet I was put in our school Twenty, presumably because I was bigger than others of my age. Moreover the first game I ever played in was a very fierce one indeed, against a Twenty of the Big School Town fellows. I did not really understand the game, and what to make of the hacking was a demoralising puzzle. I was told I had played very badly, and it was not obscurely suggested that I had funked the hacking, which was probably true; but it was a very different matter when one really knew what it all meant and what a dreadful thing it was to be thought afraid. Then fear, which is an instinct natural to every human being, was quickly got under and my second match was played in reputable fashion, as may be judged from the following letter, in which, be it observed, I make no mention of how badly I played in the first :—

OAKFIELD, *Oct. 23rd* 1864.

DEAR POLLY,

We played the Big School Town last week. They were very big fellows and beat us. But yesterday we played Vecqueray's, which is one of the Preparatory Schools, and beat them easily, getting 24 quarter ways, 4 punts out, 4 tries at goal, and 1 goal, to their 3 quarter ways and one try at goal. I got a piece about ¾ of an inch long taken right out of my leg.

The fellow who did it must have had nails in his boots, which are not allowed. I never felt it till after the match. I shall not be able to play again for a bit, but I got cheered and clapped, so I did not care.

Believe me, yours affect.

W. ALLISON.

From a letter written during the same month as the above I quote the following extract :—

I saw Big Side football yesterday in the Close. It was the Caps of the school against the Sixth. The Caps are about 70 of the best players in the school, and are so called from the velvet caps that they wear. One fellow got his arm put out, and a great many were hurt. I wish you could see a football match. It is worth looking at.

How strange it seems now that in the days when the above letter was written Rugby football was practically unknown, except at Rugby, and that public interest in football of any sort was non-existent! The Big School players used to seem as demi-gods in our eyes at that time, and certainly a Big Side Football Match, such as that of the VIth against the School, was always something in the nature of a Homeric battle. Everyone in the VIth could play, whether he had his Cap or not, and it was the one occasion in the year when the School was free to pay off any old scores that might exist. Any number of old "Rugs" could come down and play on one side or the other, according to the position they had been in when they left the school. But of Rugby football as it then was I shall have more to say later on. It is only introduced here as it appeared to my wondering eyes when I first saw it played, and, as touching its temperamental effects on me when I first played it. That I soon came really to like the game is shown by a letter written on 7th May the following year (1865), in which comes this statement :

We have a good deal of cricket now, but I don't think I like it so well as football.

We had Caps of sorts in our small way at Oakfield House, and there is a curious reference to this in one of my letters, written also in May, 1865 :

You are quite in a mistake thinking by "louts" I meant our school. I meant the common street boys, of whom there are

great numbers. Several times when I and a few others were obliged to go down town, when we returned we found about a hundred between us and the house, and had then to run the gauntlet down them all, which we did by clasping our hands tight over our heads, holding our caps as tight as possible, we who had red caps (of whom there are only 10 left in the school) were the special persons on whom they directed their attacks. To seize a red cap, I suppose, is regarded as a great honour. If once you lose your cap you never get it again. We generally got through all right, after being hit several times with stones, snowballs, etc.

I think the expression, a "lout row," is peculiar to Rugby. It did not really signify any serious class animosity, but only that at a certain period it is customary to fight, as in a Town-and-Gown row at Oxford on the 5th of November. Certainly the "louts," as they were styled, made but little pretence of fighting with the Big School at any time, but Oakfield House was some distance away on Bilton Hill, and the chance of cutting off such smaller fry as we were appealed not unnaturally to the instincts of those who liked a row in which they had a vast advantage. This was particularly in the winter time, when there was plenty of snow, but as for snowballs, I never got hit by one so hard as to remember it except when poor Harry Verelst, who was then at the Big School, came with two or three friends to see some of us and started snowballing before they left. He threw one which came like a shot out of a gun and took me in the short ribs, almost after the manner of the "chunk of old red sandstone" which caused Abner Jones to "curl up on the floor." It must have been a super-snowball indeed, to have left its memory vivid through all these years. Verelst, as is pretty generally known, was a great cricketer, and he died only about a year ago.

The term "lout," not inaptly, describes a person, of whatever class, who has had no physical training and cannot move or carry himself except in an awkward, shambling fashion. There will be very few "louts" left after this war, except among the conscientious objectors.

Between Oakfield House and the town proper there was about half-a-mile of street, at one part of which, in 1865, I saw a man in the stocks, and it was, I believe, one of the last occasions when this very salutary form of punishment was resorted to. It is easy to mention many cases for which the stocks would afford an effective remedy. Conscientious objectors, for example, could be most properly treated in this way. The case I saw, however, was merely that of a drunkard, with whom the public seemed to have some sympathy. There is a reference to it in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* under the heading: "Stocks."

I suppose boys at preparatory schools seldom differ from a few conventional types, and I had early experience of a friend who attached himself to me because I had a fair supply of pocket-money. This youth I need not name, but he was just like the greedy boy we read of in story books. He introduced me to Jacomb's and to Hobley's, the two rival shops where ices and other delights could be bought, and he stuck to me like a leech as long as my cash lasted for the two of us. The excesses in which we indulged may be judged from the following passage in a letter, undated, in 1864:—

> The Ices are most delightful now. There are strawberry, lemon, orange, greengage, pineapple, cherry, raspberry, apricot, vanilla, coffee, etc.

Fortunately my money did not last long for the purpose of such outlays, and then my friend had no further use for me.

There was a rather dreadful French master at Oakfield House, who had a habit of smiting offenders across the back of the hand with the sharp edges of a book bound in boards. Moreover, he considered everyone an offender who could not answer some question which he would occasionally propound. It was an anxious time when the question was asked of some fellow five or six places above you and he could not answer it. Consciousness of your

own ignorance on the subject would create a fervent hope that someone would give the proper answer before your turn came, each failure being marked by the paralysing crack of the book across the back of a hand. The position was similar to that of the Philistines when Samson asked his riddle, but somehow all such troubles are as nothing when you are young.

On the whole I think I was very happy at Oakfield House, and the methods of rapid tuition adopted by my Coxwold tutor, Mr Williams, had so far succeeded that I passed out into the IVth form after my first half term, and was soon head of the school, but I have very grave doubts as to whether the rapid system of learning by cribs and so forth—" cabs," we called them at Rugby—can possibly be a good one, though in my case it happened to strike a lucky subject, who, being really interested in all the old Latin and Greek stories, never forgot what I had learned—all too easily. This process, however, created an abiding disinclination to work hard at less congenial subjects, one of which was arithmetic; others were modern languages, and throughout life I have been too apt to go for form-at-a-glance. It is always to me a tedious business to inspect bloodstock along with other people, for I see all I want to see so much more quickly than they do—possibly because I am, by education, superficial, while they are thorough. Be that as it may, I was going up like a rocket on Mr Williams' get-learning-quick system at the period under notice, though, of course, at Oakfield House the bare idea of using " cabs " (cribs) was out of the question.

A kindly gentleman at Oakfield House remains in my memory. This was Major Mat. Furness, brother of our head, who lived there and was a good friend to all of us. It was from him, a year or two later, when I was at the Big School, and was attending a concert at which I met him, that I heard the news of the terrible accident at Newby Ferry in the York and Ainsty country when Sir Charles Slingsby and others were drowned.

On the subject of the hacking game at football, as it then was, I ought to add that so absolutely legitimate was hacking that in case boys decided on a fight they could set to with their fists, or, in the alternative, "have it down"—as the expression was. This meant that they went to a little cockpit sort of place at the back of the schools, perhaps eight feet by six feet, and there, holding one another by the upper arms or shoulders, hacked each other's shins till the issue was decided. To hack on or above the knees was, of course, hopelessly foul, and boots with nails in them were always prohibited, but it was a punishing sort of contest, and if it has disappeared from the school curriculum, so much the better.

It does indeed make one feel young again to write of life at Oakfield House, and to think of Mr Furness with his fiery temper and his cane; of Mother Davidson with her every-morning glass of Port for me; of the secret repasts in bedrooms on purchased potted meats and bread purloined from our supper-tables; of paper chases in which, at that time of life, I was a most futile performer; of journeys home when we all had pea-shooters to sting up old gentlemen at railway stations—oh, what nonsense it all was, and yet precious nonsense!

I must cut the experiences of Oakfield House short and get forward to the Big School.

CHAPTER VI

First Term at Rugby—"Jex"—Godley's Fag—The Curing of Barker—"Orange" Peel's Finance—Palmy Days of Rugby Cricket—Upper Middle I.—Death of my Father—Return to School—Catering Arrangements—"Mindar" and his Song—Rugby Football—All must come—House Runs—House Washing—First Experiences of "Froddy"—Natural Science and Modern Languages despised—First House Supper—Departure of Demigods

IT was in August, 1865, that I went to Rugby School, where my house-master was the Rev. T. W. Jex-Blake, one of the most delightful of men, and wholly different from any ordinary schoolmaster. "Jex," as we used to call him, was himself an old Rugbeian, and had established a record time for the Crick run which was not beaten for a good many years. He was blind of one eye or very nearly so, and there was a tradition that this was due to a combat in which he had engaged in a Town-and-Gown row at Oxford. Probably there was no truth in this, but it served to increase his popularity. He was certainly a good man to hounds and with the drag at Oxford. To me he was always kindness itself; but I am writing now of the early days when a new fellow has to settle down as best he can in strange environment. I was put in Upper Middle I. to commence with, and therefore had my experience of fagging, which I have never regretted. Fags in each house were distributed among the members of the VIth, for special service, such as dusting the great man's study and his books, sweeping the carpet; and so forth. It fell to my lot to be fag to J. A. Godley, who is now Lord Kilbracken, and I was also in the bedroom over which he was supreme. He was always one of the very best, and even on my

first night at the school I began to feel more or less at home. Godley was a really brilliant scholar, and he was also a cricketer of considerable merit. He had his Cap, and was, in fact, good all round. He used to be called "Little Boy,"[1] but the origin of that title is lost in obscurity so far as I am concerned. It was through him that I was made Library fag for the House, the duties being to issue library books once a week to those who wanted them, and keep a record of all such transactions. He was really only four years older than myself, but four years make a world of difference at that time of life when the big fellows at your school seem to be infinitely bigger and more powerful than any other men that you ever see later on. At Rugby the VIth form was responsible for the discipline of the houses, the house-master only coming in to read prayers in the evening. Whether the regime is the same now I do not know, but it used to work very well then, and to an extent which no master could possibly have controlled. Thus in our bedroom—there were nine of us—a fellow named Barker was given to snoring so badly that his presence was almost intolerable. He would awaken us all by sudden trumpet-like snorts, apart from methodical snoring, and Godley at last ordained that a string should be tied to one of his toes and passed along all the beds, the instruction being that anyone who heard him beginning to snore should pull hard at the string. The result was that he was absolutely cured of the habit within a fortnight, and if, as I hope, he is still alive and flourishing, he will certainly acknowledge the benefit he derived from this rough and ready treatment.

New fellows at Rugby in my time had to wear top hats, and were also obliged to answer anyone who had been

[1] Lord Kilbracken explains: "The origin of my nickname was a very simple one. When I went to Rugby I was in a bedroom with four other boys, all a good deal bigger than I was; they got into the way of addressing me, appropriately enough, as 'Little Boy,' and the name spread and stuck to me." Lord Kilbracken (J. A. Godley) was anything but a "little boy" when the author went to Rugby four years later.

at the school a year or more, when asked their names, parentage and so forth. The hat as a distinguishing mark was decidedly inconvenient, and it soon assumed concertina shape from the attentions bestowed on it. To the best of my recollection my first study was shared with John Sayer, who was somewhat senior to me, but I can much more clearly recall a red-haired youth named Peel—"Orange" Peel, as he was, of course, styled. He must have been a born financier, for he throve mightily by getting up raffles for half-a-sovereign. He would go round the studies and sell shilling tickets—no matter how many—and would not close his list until he had a good margin of profit. Thus one half-sovereign served him as a money-maker from the beginning to the end of a term.

It was the Augustan age of Rugby cricket when I was there, Yardley, Pauncefote, C. K. Francis, R. G. Venables and others being no ephemeral names in this respect.

Venables was in our house, and he was out by himself as a bowler in 1865. I, who came in at the tag end of a cricket season, was at first thought to promise very well, because, on being given a trial, I made ten or a dozen off Venables.

He was a left-hand, medium-pace bowler, and somehow I hit him, but the season was ending, and there was no further chance to demonstrate whether this was a fluke or not. He was four years older than myself and, I am glad to say, still is—for I see he subscribed to *The Sportsman* fund, in connection with Captain P. F. Warner's cricket, quite recently.

My division of Upper Middle I. was under the control of a master named Moberly, a good, amiable being who used to be irreverently called "Guts,"[1] though for what reason I never knew, as he certainly was not a particularly stout man. Before I had been at the school a week it was discovered that I had been underrated in being

[1] A contemporary of the author at Rugby writes: "As for old Moberly's nickname, I think you have forgotten his contour. He had a big protuberant paunch, though not otherwise a fat man."

placed in his form, but nothing could be done to alter this until the end of term, and in the meanwhile—quite early in the term—I was summoned home, for my father died on 8th September 1865.

Mr Jex-Blake told me this bad news with inimitably gentle kindness, but it was a crushing blow, and I remember seeing an all-black railway engine at Rugby station as I departed. This seemed exactly suited to the occasion. I was met at Thirsk Station by Mr Arrowsmith, the Rev. T. Walker, of Sleights, and Mr John Hodgson, of Northallerton, the executors of my father's will, and with them went to Kilvington. It was a house of gloom indeed, but there is no need to dwell on that. I attended the funeral at Thirsk, and to me the most memorable incident in connection with it is that an old, deaf watchmaker, named Dicky Scurr, went up to the grave-side after the service and threw a rose down on the coffin. I never knew what was the cause of this kindly tribute, but it must have been a good one.

Well, then, I had to set off back to school, with a heavy heart, and I sometimes think that I got better through that first term of mine than new fellows do as a rule, because boys, though ruthless by nature, are yet awed and softened by the news of such a catastrophe as had befallen me.

Trouble, however, when you are young, is evanescent, and I think I began to enjoy life at school before the end of that term. Perusal of my various letters home shows that I was constantly asking for creature comforts in the shape of hampers of food, but here it should be explained that in those days we were in a great measure dependent on our own resources both for breakfast and tea, nothing but bread and butter being given you in the ordinary routine. A large table was set apart in the hall, on which all the private viands, such as hams, pigeon pies, etc., were placed, and it was the custom, at the beginning of each term, to form ourselves into sets—otherwise messes—subscribing so much, and appointing one of us

as the caterer, whose business it was to eke out home supplies with dishes from Jacomb's or Hobley's. This was all very well for those who had plenty of pocket-money, as I always had, but it was bad business for those who had not. Sometimes you would see derelict units of the house who could not join any set, and could perhaps ill afford even a pot of jam, which would have to last them a long while.

The VIth fellows were at a table and in a set of their own, and they generally came in rather late for breakfast, so that any fags who had finished and were going away could be hailed and given slices of bread to toast in the butler's pantry. On that same fire I learned how to make scrambled eggs with some success, but when I call the place a butler's pantry I distinguish it too highly, for the occupant of it, whose name was, I think, Manders, but who was always addressed as " Mindar," was a general factotum, and his duties included calling us in the morning.

He would come into your bedroom punctually at 6.30 A.M., and say, as he entered : " Gentlemen, please ! " He would then walk to the end of the room, where, in this case, was Godley's bed, and reel off each name as he passed each bed : " Mr Godley," " Mr Graham "—and so on, to " Mr Allison "—I was nearest the door. Then, at the moment of his exit, he would say : " If you please, gentlemen ! "

And yet how truly unpleasing it used to be to get up on those cold mornings, when the chapel bell commenced ringing at 6.45 A.M., and you were late if you did not present yourself before seven !

Good old " Mindar " ! He would regularly unbend once a term on the occasion of hall-singing, when all new fellows had to stand on a table in the hall and sing, in accordance with " Tom Brown " tradition.

At these times " Mindar " used to be coerced into the hall, and after much persuasion he would reel off his one song, sitting back against one of the brass-bound oak tables :

'Tis forty years, my old friend John,
Since you and I were b'ys,
When we were b'ys,
Merry, merry b'ys;
When we were b'ys together—
Methinks it seems but yesterday
Since we were b'ys together!

This used always to be applauded to the echo and "Mindar" sang it with a most benevolent and self-satisfied smile.

That first term I got thoroughly initiated into Rugby football, though I was then no novice at it. The game was compulsory unless you had a medical certificate to exempt you; and, after dinner, on half-holidays, it was customary to repair to the notice-board on the outer door, where, as often as not, you would find yourself posted up to play on one side or the other of a "pick up" match among your own house, with the footnote: "All must come." That was good business, and I never heard of a conscientious objector.

Then there were the House runs over long distances of country, and here the compulsion was in the alternative: "All fags must run or carry coats," which meant that if you did not run you had to attend at the start and receive coats from those who took them off, and carry these coats to the "come in" so as to be ready to hand them to the runners. During that first term of mine I was always one of the runners.

Another pastime was described as "House washing," and this is how I wrote about it to my sister at the period under notice:

There was what is called a "house washing" yesterday. That is, the house went down to the brook and commenced jumping the same in certain selected spots. Of course some of these spots are selected because no one can jump them, and the small boys can seldom get over any at all. The biggest go first and stand by to haul the others out as they go in; this is sometimes a difficult operation, as they occasionally go above the knees in

mud and require three or four people to pull them out. You can imagine the miserable state everybody gets into before the end.

Readers who are not old Rugbeians may need the explanation that the brook in question winds about so much that it can be crossed again and again in a point-to-point line, and the school steeplechases used to be run over it.

Referring to my remarks on my letters which demanded food, I may quote the following, written on 15th October 1865 :

Send me a hamper when you get home, with anything in it that will keep. Of course you can send a few things that won't, as we can eat them first. If you send a pie, it had best be in a pie-dish, as they so soon go mouldy without, being kept in rather a damp place. We have got quite sick of jam, since we have had so much of it lately.

I should add here that we used to be given very small beer, known as " swipes," for dinner and supper, but my trusty Doctor Ryott would not hear of it for me, and I always had my own special cask of Rhodes's beer from Thirsk, as well as the morning glass of Port which used to be administered to me by the matron, Mrs Lee. This, no doubt, seems rather dreadful to modern educationists, but it happened as I write, and I am alive and well to tell the tale.

It may be thought that I should ere now have written something of our headmaster, Dr Temple, but at that early period I regarded him simply with awe and had not come to know him as I did in later years. His voice was alarmingly harsh, but his eyes were always very kind, and " Froddy," as he was called, was really one of the most successful headmasters ever known, Arnold not excepted. My first meetings with him were when I had to take up copies of Latin verses or other composition, recommended for inscription in his album, and for every three of such copies he gave you a guinea prize at Billington's, the booksellers. He would always read

the stuff with apparent interest, while you were standing by in nervous trepidation, and then send you away with a pleasant word or two about it that would make the world seem to go very well with you.

I had a few experiences such as this even in my first term, for I had been placed too low in the school, and naturally did work which compared favourably with that of Upper Middle I., but I will not presume to give any record of Dr Temple here, at this stage, for I was to see so much more of him later on.

Doubtless schools have been improved greatly since my time, but there was even then abundance of opportunity to tackle outside subjects if you wished—only you did not wish, and you regarded anyone who did almost as if he were a Nonconformist.

Natural science, botany, chemistry, mechanics, geology —all these things you could learn if you liked, but such studies were held in contempt, and the good Mr James Wilson, who gave instruction in natural science, was called Jim "Stinks," not in an opprobrious sense, but as signifying the line of his teaching. Another Natural Science master, Rev. T. N. Hutchinson, went by the name of "Beaklet," to distinguish him from his elder brother, Rev. C. B. Hutchinson, who was a house-master, known as "Beak," presumably because he had a longish nose. Natural science used to include botany, and of this Mr Frank Kitchener, whose acquaintance I had made earlier, was the master, but somehow we were never encouraged to take up these outside subjects, Classics being considered more important by far. Mr Kitchener, it is clear, took some interest in me, for there is a letter, dated 14th October 1866, in which I wrote:

> I went to breakfast with Mr Kitchener the other day. He had been botanising all the time he was at the Lakes; so I am not sorry I did not join him there.

Nevertheless, most of us had some taste in plants and flowers, as the box gardens outside our study windows

round the quadrangle used to show, but there was a conservative shrinking from any subject of education that savoured of novelty. Even modern languages were regarded by most of us with contempt, and the teachers of them were treated with scant respect.

There were eight boarding-houses—viz. the School House, Arnold's, Burrows', Bowden Smith's, Jex-Blake's, Hutchinson's, Moberly's and Wilson's.

The House supper at the end of that first term dwells in my mind, for some of our seeming demigods were leaving, one of them being Ingham, son of the well-known police magistrate. He had obtained that year the first of the five exhibitions given by the school, and he went to Christ Church. What I thought of these departures is shown by the following extract from a letter written at the beginning of the next term :

> Venables and Ingham have left for College, which weakens our house considerably at football. I don't suppose we shall be nearly the best this half.

I remember catching sight of Ingham a good many years later, and he was by no means so gigantic and Herculean as one imagined him at the early period. By the end of the term it had been settled that I was to go next term into the Upper School, and this ended my personal experience as a fag.

CHAPTER VII

In the Upper School—"Plug"—Batley transplants the big Tree—Irascible Powell—Stuart Wortley—Learning German—Through the Lower Fifth into the Fifth—Death of my Mother—Through the Fifth into the Twenty—My first Breech-loader—My first Grouse—An astounding Drive to Saltersgate Moor—Shooting at Daybreak

IN my second term at the school I was in the Lower Vth, the division of it over which the Rev. C. T. Arnold presided. He was a somewhat ponderous gentleman whom we called "Plug," and really that name gave quite a good general impression of him. I got on well with him, but I remember little of his methods of teaching except that once he gave us a subject on which to write Latin and English verse, the one to be a translation of the other. There was a big tree in the Close, so near to the old chapel that certain improvements in the building could not be carried out, for the tree was so highly esteemed that the idea of felling it was not for a moment entertained. A way out of the difficulty was found by a man named Batley, who undertook to move the tree a distance of about fifty yards and establish it well and flourishing in its new site. What is more, he and his men did the work with perfect success, and it was at the beginning of their enterprise that we were told to write Latin and English verse on the subject.

Unimportant things remain strangely in the memory while memorable ones are forgotten, and so it is that even now I can recall how I wrote:

Batleius ille, quem videtis hospites,
Ait redemptor esse callidissimus.

That Batley there whom, stranger folk,
You see before your eyes,
A bold contractor boasts to be,
But not more bold than wise.

And so on, Latin and English, to further explanation of Batley's contract.

That is all I can charge my memory with in connection with the Rev. "Plug's" tuition, but I know I made several good friends that term.

I had a study with Frederick York Powell, who was my senior by more than a year, and was reputed to be of Spanish extraction, solely—I dare say—because he adorned the study with one or two Spanish knives, and was of a very hasty temper. Charles Beilby Stuart Wortley was my contemporary in the same house, and he had a study with a youth named Kynnersley. I somehow engineered a feud between them and Powell which caused me great diversion, until one day, in a hasty moment, Powell jabbed me in the leg with one of his Spanish knives, not meaning it, I am sure, but the mark remains to this day. Poor "old" Powell! he was much upset by what he had done, and, of course, it didn't matter. Shortly afterwards he hit a VIth form fellow, Leigh Bennett, on the head with a broom handle, as he entered our study, the only excuse being that he (Powell) thought it was Kynnersley. Needless to say, that excuse did not avail him.

Powell later on rose to distinction as Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford, in succession to J. A. Froude, and there is a record of him in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

How it is that boys at school become intimate friends no one ever knows, and they themselves do not, as a rule, remember. I am sure I don't know how it was that I first came to know Stuart Wortley, and he is even less likely to remember when he first regarded me except as one of the other fellows; but somehow we did become friends throughout all the time at school and later, at Oxford, and later still, on the N.-E. Circuit, until our paths diverged—he to Parliamentary duties and I to horse-breeding and journalism. It is a strange world, but I know well that the old friendship is not forgotten.

There remained always at that time and later the

same strange contempt for subjects outside the Classics, Divinity and History. A German lesson was regarded as an opportunity for mere fooling, and the master—his name was Grenfell—was known simply as the Man. Poor fellow! He did his best, but my learning of German even throughout five years never made me master of the rudiments of the language. I had a watch the checkspring of which was broken, and if wound up it would run off the whole twenty-four hours in about five minutes, making a considerable buzzing noise in so doing. It was a frequent custom, during a German lesson, to wind up this watch and then pass it along from hand to hand so that the unfortunate Man, though desperately annoyed by its buzzing, could never track it home. That was but one of the trials to which he was subjected.

What chances we miss in our young days! Even German would, of course, have been useful, if one had cared to master the language, but somehow one didn't and was not encouraged to do so.

Some of us there were with a taste for music, and among these Stuart Wortley was pre-eminent. From the first he was a pianist almost of genius, and he managed to keep his music going even at school, which is a rare event among boys. There was a piano in the hall in our house, and there were music masters, but I never saw one of them.

All this early period was really uneventful, save that, so far as I am concerned, I again found that the Lower Vth was comparative child's play, and got out of it in one short term, so that on returning after the Easter holidays of that year, 1866, I wrote to my mother a letter which, for a very special reason, I am thankful for having had occasion to write. It is dated Rugby, 20th April 1866, and says:

I arrived here safely yesterday. Scarcely any one had come, so I wished that I had come by a later train. I have got fairly head by the examination and get out head into the Fifth, since ours is the senior division of the Lower Fifths.

The letter from which I quote the above was sent on by my mother to my sister, enclosed in a letter from herself, saying :

> Just a minute before the post comes to enclose you W.'s letter. Mind and take care of it. Does he not do wonderfully ? I had a drive this morning and took Eliza Rhodes. I feel much better, and hope, with God's blessing, soon to be well again.

I would not have quoted from those two letters were it not that mine was, I feel almost sure, the very last I ever wrote to my mother. Her own letter—which I had never seen until quite recently—shows that she was gratified by the news which mine contained, and for that I am indeed thankful. I had no knowledge at that time that she was ill. Boys are never told about such troubles, but it is clear that my sister knew.

Less than two months after my letter was written my mother was dead—12th July 1866—and I had thus lost both parents within a year.

It is better not to dwell on mournful incidents of the past. Again Mr Jex-Blake had broken the bad news to me with kindly words, and as I waited at Rugby station that time I saw a black railway engine with just a green patch on it. I interpreted this to mean that my mother was still alive, and she was so on my arrival at home, just sufficiently to know me, but two nights later I was sent hurriedly to the Rectory to summon Mr Kingsley, whose house door had been left open so that I could go straight in and up to his bedroom. He woke up and came along within ten minutes. The end was very near, though it did not actually come until late in the following afternoon.

Let us pass on, for the blow had fallen, and reminiscences of it are futile.

I went back to school to finish the term and its examinations, this time without conspicuous success—for that, in the circumstances, could hardly be expected—but the result sufficed to get me out of the Vth form into the

Twenty for the following term. Then came the summer holidays, spent at Sleights Vicarage, near Whitby, the vicar's wife, Mrs Walker, being my aunt on my mother's side, and the Rev. T. Walker was one of the executors of my father's will.

Sorrows quickly lose their poignancy when we are young, and by the first week in August I was vastly excited about a new gun which had been bought for me from W. R. Pape, of Newcastle. Hitherto I had handled nothing but muzzle-loaders, of which my father had some very good ones, but this was a pin-fire breech-loader, 16 bore, and a really beautiful light gun. Pape's guns had won *The Field* gun trials three years, and the joy of possessing one of these champion weapons was indeed great. With it came instructions for loading cartridges, with sundry little measures for powder and shot, and a machine to screw on to a table. In that machine you could turn down the edges of the cartridge on the end wad. It was all very primitive, but there was vast pleasure even in loading cartridges after screwing the machine to one of my aunt's tables. The cleaning of the gun, scrupulously according to instructions, was also a constant delight, and the culminating event was that I should go grouse-shooting on Saltersgate Moor on the 12th. It was easy to get permission to shoot on Saltersgate Moor in those days—so easy that the only chance of any success was to commence shooting at the very first break of day before the crowd of shooters had arrived. A neighbouring farmer, named Mead, had arranged to drive a dog-cart to the scene of action in the small hours of the appointed morning, and he agreed to call for me. I had sent for a pointer dog from home, and now let me quote from *The Sport of Shooting*, written by me years ago, for it is perfectly accurate in its details of this expedition.

"I had most carefully prepared my bag of cartridges, gun and all accoutrements. Don had been discreetly fed

and exercised, so that his condition appeared better than it had been, and his breathing was certainly less stertorous. As for a game-bag, Mead said that his man would carry that, and so there was no more to think of, except as to whether it would be well to go to bed at all or not overnight.

" I did not like to trust anyone to wake me, but as I happened to have an alarum with me, I concluded to trust it, and so, setting it to one o'clock, I essayed to snatch a few hours of rest.

" Breakfast had been laid out for me overnight, and when I was startled from what seemed but a momentary period of repose by the noise of the alarum I certainly felt that I should have been better advised had I not gone to bed at all. There was my cold bath, and very untempting it seemed: nevertheless I resolutely entered it. . . . I felt cold, shaky and unrefreshed, as I went downstairs, where I found a little servant was already bestirring herself and boiling the kettle to make me tea.

" The tea and a little food certainly improved me, but I shivered as I looked out into the night and then stepped gingerly forth to fetch Don from the outhouse. The wind blew chill and there was a slight drizzling rain, so I was glad to get back into the house with the liberated dog. . . . Then I sat down at one side of the kitchen fire, and the little servant, half dead with sleep, bestowed herself upon a stool in the corner. Don became pensive and blinked at the flickering flames. I was half nodding off to sleep when suddenly the sound of wheels aroused me and I started up as I heard them stop opposite the house. Then came a prolonged shout, ' Yo-ho-hup ! ' and I knew that Mead had arrived, so I hurried to the door, called out: ' All right,' and quickly collecting gun, greatcoat and ammunition, summoned Don and sallied forth.

" ' Good-morning, sir,' said Mead, with what seemed to me revolting heartiness—for he did not mean it by way of joke—' we're in nice time. Here, John, get down and

help to put that dog into the trap. I dare say he and old Ponto won't quarrel!' . . . John deposited Don in the dog-cart, whence at once arose irritable and ominous expostulations on the part of Ponto, and deep minatory grumblings from my dog. . . . However a few rough objurgations addressed by John to the pair served to quiet them.

"I took my seat alongside Mead and with John behind we started on our way. It was quite dark, and for my part I was not inclined for conversation, but my companion rattled on about the moor and his previous experiences of it, the birds and the dogs and the men that had been shot there. 'For,' said he, 'it gets like the battle of Waterloo after an hour or two, when people have drawn up from all sides.'

"The idea seemed hardly pleasant to me, but I was laboriously engaged walking up Blue Bank, which necessitated our getting down at a very early period of the drive, and plodding away on foot for most of a mile before we reached the top. . . . Arrived on level ground we once more took our seats. . . . There was silence for a few moments. We were driving through a regular Scotch mist which filled the eyes with cold water. The lamps glared dimly through it.

"At that moment one dog took umbrage at the other—I fancy a jolt of the vehicle shook them together, so that they mutually regarded themselves as having been insulted, and, without more, they fell to and fought in deadly wise under the seat and among our legs. The snarling, barking, swearing, struggling, snapping and gnashing was so frightful that there is small wonder that our horse bolted in very panic, and away we went fast and furious in the mist and darkness, while the combat raged in perilous proximity to our shrinking calves.

"We had infallibly been bitten, but that another fate was in store for us. The horse got off the road, it being impossible to see our way at the rate we were going, and in a very few moments a bump, as he crossed some 'grip'

or hollow, caused Mead to fly sidelong from the vehicle, still retaining a sitting posture, while I, on whom the force of the excellent springs seemed to have had more effect, was propelled high into the air—also to the right—and descended head downwards . . . and penetrated to some depth through the yielding surface of my landing-place. Mead soon extricated me, and I was none the worse, save for a coating of mire over my face and head. Meanwhile John, holding on like grim death to the back seat of the dog-cart, had been so taken up by his own position that he never knew we had gone until the horse, some hundred yards further on, plunged knee-deep in the treacherous ground and fell. In consequence of this John performed a back somersault away over the horse's head, and the dogs were flung out over the splash-board, which caused them to cease their bloody battle for the time being.

"It was quite a marvel that no damage of any kind seemed to have been done to man, beast or vehicle. Ponto and Don presented a gory appearance but that was the result of their battle. The horse got on his legs again after a little difficulty, and, though at first much alarmed, soon grew quiet as we led him back to the road when we had gathered up the guns and other paraphernalia. The pointers still showing signs of enmity, we decided to put Ponto in the trap and make Don run, so that they might be effectually separated. Once more then we took our seats. . . . At last in the grey misty light of dawn we reached our destination and Mead and I got down at the boundary of the moor, while John went and put the horse up somewhere hard by. Our guns, cartridges and everything else were duly in order, and all was ready for a start —except that there was hardly sufficient light as yet. 'We are in plenty of time after all,' said Mead. It was a quarter to four o'clock. No one else seemed to be in the vicinity, and I felt as if about to take part in a night attack on some enemy. The feud between Don and Ponto now began to break out again, and renewed strife was imminent. . . . At last, in spite of the abusive threats

of John, they could be no longer restrained and were falling to in all fury; so that Mead exclaimed: 'It's no use. These dogs'll never agree and they'll frighten all the birds off the place. We must each go different ways, and each take his own dog.' Suiting the action to the word, before I had time to ask for directions, he beat the dogs asunder and hurried away, leading Ponto by the ear, and I was left alone with Don."

Thus far I quote from *The Sport of Shooting* (Routledge & Sons), for it is a faithful report of what happened, and I am able to verify it from one of the letters written to my sister, the first sheet of which is missing, but it takes up the story thus:

SLEIGHTS,
[*Date, no doubt, 13th Aug.* 1866.]

. . . . . .

man in the gig who was supposed to be thoroughly acquainted with the road led the horse. [It would seem that John got down for this purpose.—W. A.]. Even then we drove into the moor several times. We arrived a little before four and soon started shooting. At about four o'clock, I heard bang, bang, bang, and great shouts. "Now then, look out!" said Mead (that is the man's name) firing up into the air, with no effect. I saw a black object looming in the distance, and fired vaguely into space, and, of course, missed. The fortunate grouse escaped everybody (there were now about seven shooting).

After this, you can imagine my disgust on finding that the dog, which I have fed myself every day and taken the greatest possible pains with, would persist in following and fighting with Mead's dog, and, when driven away, turned sulky and would not range; so I could only get a chance at birds which had been shot at by someone else and, of course, were much harder to hit, as they flew faster. However, my second shot was more successful, at 4.5 A.M. (of course I timed my first grouse), driven, of course, by the shots fired at it. Mead [now some distance away] saw it, but could not get a shot. "Now then!" he cried; nearer it came; thoughts flitted through my mind as to the consequences if I missed it. My hand trembled, I pointed my weapon . . . and as the smoke cleared away an attentive observer might have seen an inanimate and white-trousered bird, lying on the heather, and a youth apparently of about 15 years of age making

frantic attempts to load again in less than no time, on account of his extreme desire to pick up the game—it, of course, being unsportsmanlike to advance with empty gun.

About ten minutes after, I got another shot at a driven bird and killed it—at least knocked it over—and while endeavouring to extinguish the remnant of its life, lost sight of Mead, and as there was now a thick mist completely lost myself until it cleared away. There were by this time about 60 people shooting, and as my dog would not range, but "shivering follow at my heel," I got no more. We set off home again at 9 o'clock A.M., and thus ended my first morning of grouse shooting.

I may as well add here that I have shot a good many grouse since that morning, but none have left a memory so fresh and happy as did that first brace.

This, however, is a holiday interlude. I must revert to Rugby in the winter term of 1866, when I took my place in the Twenty, of which Jex-Blake, to whom I was sincerely attached, was the master.

CHAPTER VIII

Jex-Blake and his Influence—How I saw him at Assouan—Mr Gubbins and Sam Darling not Egyptologists—Jex-Blake and the Victor Wild Verses—He leaves Rugby for Cheltenham—Rugby Contemporaries—The Rifle Corps—I defeat Humphry at Shooting—Stevenson—Other Notables—Blair Athol's the Blood—Through Four Forms in Four Terms—Concerning the Sixth—"Jex" and my "Character"—The Rabbit Supper

TO say that I was sincerely attached to Jex-Blake is but a very mild statement of truth. His influence was always for good, and I only wish that he had remained longer at the school. What manner of influence he had may be judged from the following story. It happened, during the period now under notice, that I wanted, from sheer idleness, to absent myself from a German lesson one afternoon, and asked Jex-Blake for permission, alleging that I had a headache and felt unwell. He immediately agreed, and then, within ten minutes, though I do not pretend to have been a George Washington at any time, I felt it was not the game to tell lies to old "Jex," and sat down at once to write him a letter owning up that there was nothing the matter with me, and that I was very sorry. I left this in his room when I had seen him go out, and very soon I got an answer:

DEAR ALLISON,

Quite right. I always did believe you unreservedly and I always shall.

T. W. J. B.

The subject was never mentioned again, but it is needless to say that I never again abused his confidence. That was a man who knew just how to touch whatever good principle you had in you.

It is a matter of great regret to me that the last time I saw Jex-Blake, who was then Dean of Wells, I did not go up and speak to him. It was at the principal hotel at Assouan in 1903, and he was lunching there with Mrs Jex-Blake and several of his numerous family. They were going on to Khartoum. I was lunching at another table with Mr Gubbins and Sam Darling, and we too had been going to Khartoum, but my companions, not being Egyptologists, had got sick of seeing temples and tombs, and persuaded me to cancel our tickets and go back to Cairo. But for this I should have been with Jex-Blake on the Nile boat to Khartoum, and, as it was, I hesitated to go and interrupt him and his luncheon-party. So we went away and I never saw him again.

One of my Rugby letters to my sister, dated 7th April 1867, gives a pretty good impression of his kindly sympathy. The following is an extract :—

> I and two other fellows walked last Wednesday to Stanfield Hall, about nine miles from here. When we had got about half way there, we heard a noise and up came Jex taking Mrs Jex out for a drive. We got up behind and, after driving for some distance, were turned out, as they were going in a different direction.
>
> We got there after losing our way. The style of thing was a house, deer, lake, swans. We returned by train, much too late for tea ; but Jex, having, wonderful to relate, remembered that we were out, had made them keep the water boiling, so we made coffee, etc. in our own study.

This was, of course, but a trifling incident, but it shows in a nutshell the terms on which we were with " Jex," and his thoughtfulness for all of us. There never was a better sort.

Once, in long later years, when I had written some Latin verses on Victor Wild and the big weight given to him for the Lincoln Handicap, entitled *Victor Furens de onere imposito*, and published them in *The Sportsman*, I sent a copy to Doctor Jex-Blake, half fearing that he would express disappointment at my having become a sporting journalist,

but in the face of this trial he was still perfect, for he wrote: "I fear your verses are too good for your readers; but in all things character commands success."

It was at the end of 1868 that we lost our inimitable house-master, who was taken away as headmaster of Cheltenham. In a letter dated 15th December that year I wrote:

> I believe we are almost certain to lose Mr Jex-Blake. He has got such very good testimonials.

I think he would fain have stayed where he was, at Rugby, but he had a large family of daughters and, up to then, no son: so I suppose he accepted promotion as a matter of family duty.

There were many good fellows at Rugby in those days, and among them none remains more notable than F. C. Selous, whose fame was destined to become world-wide. He came up in the January term of 1866, and was in Wilson's house. Contemporary with him at that house were C. K. Francis, the well-known police magistrate, whose bowling was always much argued about but was singularly effective; Harry Badger, now the best known York solicitor, and—somewhat younger—John Feilden Brocklehurst—whom I believe they called "Sloper"—whether from some fancied resemblance to that character or not—but who became a fine figure of a man and is now Lord Ranksborough.

Now that I have started on this sort of list, how is it to be ended within a reasonable limit?

There were two Tobins in our house, both very fine cricketers and well worthy to be mentioned even with Pauncefote, Venables, Francis and Yardley. These Tobins were cousins, and young Tobin became captain of the first Rugby Rifle Corps, which was enrolled in 1867, and of which A. P. Humphry was one of the corporals. His name will always be remembered in connection with rifle shooting, for, some years later, he won the Queen's Prize at Wimbledon, and there is a Humphry Prize

shot for annually now. Yet I once beat him in shooting for a sweepstake at school. He and I had tied with our final shot at 500 yards, and had to take one more chance as a decider. He shot first and made a centre. My form at 500 yards was most erratic, being, often enough, two or three misses and then a bull, but on this particular occasion I brought off the bull, though none of us at that time anticipated the future fame of the marksman whom I defeated.

Boys at school are strange beings, and there was one fellow in our house who had been "sent to Coventry" before I went to the school. Of course I do not mention his name, and we were never told by the older division what his offence had been; but the punishment was a grievous one, for no one ever spoke to him, or took the slightest notice of him. He had entered the school in 1863, being then thirteen years old, and he possessed considerable ability, but his life must have been one of deadly gloom.

Another curious case was that of W. E. Stevenson, who entered in 1865, and was also in our house. He was black-haired and swarthy, but amiable and well-meaning. Whether from lack of a sense of humour or some peculiar kink of temperament that made him a prototype of Mr Bultitude, among boys, he could never hit it off with any of the others and remained to the last a recluse who was made a butt of when he chanced to emerge from obscurity. Poor Stevenson! I met him in later years, when I had been urged to assist the formation of the Liberal Union Club by writing about it in *St Stephen's Review*. The visible promoters did not seem to me to be very substantial, and I asked, before going further, to be introduced to the great capitalist who, they said, was behind them. It was agreed at last that I should meet him at luncheon, and when I did so—who should it turn out to be but Stevenson! He seemed really pleased to meet me again, but, poor chap! I am afraid that the Liberal Union Club was not very long before it had absorbed his capital.

One of Sir William Gallwey's sons, Lionel, went to Rugby the same term that I did, but what has come of him I know not. Then there was William Warner, who has for many years been one of the leading luminaries of Oxford. He was entered in our house only two months later than myself. He was my great rival so far as school distinction was concerned, but always one of my best friends, both there and at Oxford. He was of quite a different type from my other friends, being, indeed, of an exemplary character, but he was a musician of quite rare class—as boys go—and a pianist whom even the most thoughtless could not fail to appreciate. Another contemporary in our house was Phipps John Hornby, now a venerable archdeacon—*videlicet* of Lancaster. He was, in my time, "Young" Hornby, for his elder brother, Hugh Phipps Hornby, was also among us, being one of the 1863 entry.

In January, 1867, there came to the school Charles William Lloyd Bulpett, who developed into one of the best long-distance runners of his day, and set up a new record for the "Crick." He was in Wilson's house, along with Selous and the others that I have mentioned.

Then another of the very best was Sydney Parker, son of the then Lord Macclesfield, and he was one of the select coterie in our house, where he came in May, 1867. Another excellent sportsman was Ralph Thurston Bassett, entered in 1866. It was to him more than to anyone else that I propounded my great breeding theory, the formula of which was: "Blair Athol's the blood!"

It may be well to refrain from a further extension of this catalogue, but additional characters will drop in as my story proceeds.

It may seem strange, after my recent vicissitudes, that I should have settled down very easily to work in the Twenty, under Jex-Blake, but it evidently was so, for it was not more than three weeks after the beginning of that winter term of 1866 when I wrote:

Oct. 14th, 1866.

I hope to get into the Sixth at Xmas—at least to get my place kept in it, for I sha'n't be old enough to go into it before next Midsummer ; but, of course, when your place is kept in the Sixth it goes up just the same as if you were in it, and may be ever so high by the time you are old enough to enter.

The hope expressed in the above was fulfilled, and I did get into the VIth at the end of that term, being second in the Twenty to Warner's first. We both had to wait until after Midsummer before we could take our places in the VIth, as no one under sixteen was supposed to have sufficient personal authority to be entrusted with VIth form powers. When we did ultimately go to the places appointed for us, Warner found himself twenty-first in the school and I was twenty-second, out of a total of forty-nine in the VIth form. That was in the winter term of 1867.

Mr Wells and others think little of Public School education, and they may be right. At any rate, I am sure we set far too much store in those days on subjects of very little practical importance. Treating the matter, however, as simply one of mental gymnastics, I had done something like a record by walking through four forms in four terms, and reaching the VIth form when I had still three and a half years to pass at Rugby. As places in the VIth go up automatically as the older division, who are above you, leave, it was, of course, obvious that without any further trouble on my part I must rise to near the head of the school, but Warner, being as young as I was, would always keep his lead. The arrangement seems to me to have been an unwise one, for the stimulus of competition ceased, and it was very tempting to look forward to three years of having a good time while doing only just so much work as would keep you out of absolute trouble with the authorities.

While there was still something to be fought for I had put in my best efforts, and in saying I " walked " through the Twenty, I am far from claiming that it was in the nature

of a walk-over. Far from it; in a letter, dated 21st October 1866, there is the following:—

I shall come home with a most haggard appearance, the effects of reading for the examination. Besides getting up subjects you have done during the half, you are obliged to take up three extra subjects, such as about 250 pages of some very dry history; a book of Stanley's on some subject or other; about 500 Latin lines; about half an arithmetic book of sums to do, or half an Algebra (always much the latter half); some horrid French book to prepare, etc., etc. I think I shall take up History, Divinity and the Lines, although they require the hardest work, but I think I can do them best.

Thus, there was evidently something to do, and I should perhaps explain that the 500 Latin lines were to be committed to memory. It was the football season, however, and one got plenty of exercise. In the same letter I read:

I am at present rather sore from the effects of football yesterday; but what I feel the most is a hack just above my heel, on the sinew, given me by someone of our own side who was standing behind and missed the object he intended to hit and hit me instead.

It is evident also, from a later letter in the same term, that creature comforts were not neglected, when it came to the usual Saturday night suppers in our studies:

We had a capital supper of rabbits last night. Only the most aggravating thing was that just as we began, Jex sent for me to let me see my Character, and kept me about half-an-hour discussing who it was to be sent to, and I knew all the time that the "wittles was cooling," and was not quite certain as to whether they might not all be eaten by the time I came back; but I found the other fellows had waited for me and the "wittles," being down before the fire, had taken no harm.

You must send me another hamper soon, as we are just out of provisions. Mind it has plenty in it.

The Old Rug. match comes off next week. The school are sure to be beaten as there are about 200 great fat old fellows to 80 of the school.

The letter from which the above is extracted has no date, but was written near the end of that winter term, 1866, as the allusion to my " character " and the old " Rug." match clearly indicate. Poor Jex-Blake must have been sorely perplexed as to my home status, and whether the discussion of it with me resulted in the " character " being forwarded to Mr Arrowsmith, I cannot remember. If it was, it would, no doubt, be filed among title-deeds and other legal documents in a tin box. It was a good " character " anyhow, and it was kind of " Jex " to show it to me, for doubtless I should never know anything about it otherwise.

CHAPTER IX

Out of Control—Money and Doctor's Certificates—Mr Arrowsmith's Cornucopia—"Bob" Colling finds me a Horse—Tragedy of the Fifth Form Verse and Prose—Browne Quarts.!—Rifle Shooting Extraordinary—Shot by Ramrods—The Windsor Review—Selous and the Swans—Installed in the Sixth Form—I read a Lesson—Concerning my Duties

HITHERTO, even the most virulent anti-gambler would find it difficult to carp at my progress in life, but the time had come when I was practically out of control. Dear old Mr Arrowsmith, who was to all intents and purposes my guardian, never pretended for a moment to exercise any sort of authority over me, and I cannot recall that he ever refused to send money whenever I asked for it. As early as the spring of 1867 I took to extending holidays by several weeks, but, being attached to school and my friends there, I was always careful to provide adequate excuses. It was easy to get my old friend, Dr Ryott, to certify that I was unfit to leave home for just as long as I wished to stay there. The good man had a rooted belief that, but for his watchful care over my childhood, I should not have lived, and it was a simple matter to go to him, with a doleful countenance, and he would at once certify that I was ill.

Some may think it strange that I stayed at school at all, but one often sees a riderless horse in a steeplechase do very much the same sort of thing. He carries on with the rest of the field, sometimes missing a fence altogether, sometimes going in front, sometimes dropping back, but never quite abandoning the game. The last three years of my school life were passed in a very similar erratic fashion.

I find two letters written in the first part of 1867 which fairly illustrate how Mr Arrowsmith was regarded even at that period. Both are to my sister, and one says :

Tell Mr Arrowsmith to send money instantly. . . . This is important ; no delay can be brooked.

The other says :

Mr A. sent plenty of money for present needs.

Here is another extract :

The state of Mr A.'s intellect is becoming alarming.

The eve of Valentine's day I drew two figures, one for him and one for me. I was depicted as holding a long bill in my hand. "Guardian and Ward" underneath.

Mr A. says : "Do you think £4 will cover it ?" I reply : "I think so." [*Aside*] "I only owe £1." Now obviously, to anyone with a grain of sense, this referred to my having already received so much more than I wanted for my debts. But lo ! this morning I receive a letter from Mr A. I open it and a P.O.O. flutters out. I examine the amount—£4 ! Letter says he has duly received my epistle and forwards me £4 as requested !

Here is another extract from an undated letter, written during the summer of 1867 :

Did I ever tell you about Mr Arrowsmith and my school bills last holidays ? I sent John one day to take them to him, and Tom and I went to Thirsk two days after. In the course of conversation with Mr A. he said : "Ah, let me see, have I had your school bills yet ?" I told him, of course he had, as I had sent him them just before. He said : "Well, it may be so. I may have had them, or I may not—I may have paid them, or I may not—for anything I know. Perhaps I had better ask James about it."

So on, through many letters, one of which has already been mentioned in the Prologue, in reference to the "Kingcraft orgy."

In 1869 I wrote :

Threaten Mr A. with my direst vengeance if a horse is not obtained before I come back. If it is a good hunter that is the main thing, as it can easily be made a hack to a certain extent.

Then again:

Mr A. is being urged on by almost daily letters from me and visits from Tom to get a horse. He has commissioned Cole to buy one at Sir C. Constable's sale.

Cole, mentioned above, was the straightforward and popular horse-dealer, Tom Cole, who had a stable near Thirsk station. He failed to buy what was wanted at the sale, and writing from Rugby, on 10th December 1869, I gave the following intimation:

I dare say I shall bring a horse back with me. Mr Colling has discovered one where he is now staying near Loughbro', which will be warranted, and is a capital hunter and drives well. He is going to ride the horse himself to make further trial and will let me know the result.

It will interest a good many younger people to know that "Mr Colling" was Bob Colling, son of that grand old sportsman, the late John Colling, of Hurworth, and this same Bob Colling—as good a man on a horse as you could wish to see—is the father of Bob Colling, who is now one of the most successful trainers at Newmarket, and was, earlier on, a first-rate jockey.

Bob Colling the elder is alive now, and at the time of my letter he was staying with a friend of his named Paget, from whom he bought for me a horse whose reputation even now lingers in North Yorkshire. His name was Cobweb. He was a hog-maned, powerful beast, very short of breeding, but an extraordinary jumper, especially at timber and water. His owner had schooled him at timber by always riding him at the post, so that he never chanced it, and indeed, if left to himself, would jump the post rather than the rails. He lasted me a good many years, but what he cost I do not remember. That, of course, was a matter for Mr Arrowsmith.

In pursuit of a horse I have gone too far ahead, and must revert to that first term of 1867, when my place was in the VIth, but corporeally I was in the Twenty. Already the blight of being out of control had commenced, and I

had contrived to cut five weeks out of that term, thanks to Dr Ryott and his certificates. Thus, on 20th April 1867:

All the work of the term is now over. The Fifth form verse and prose have both been sent in; the Exam., of which there are only 4 papers at Easter, is half finished. I am second in marks for the term (of course having an average for the time I have been away). I am head for the Composition of the last five weeks, but as Warner was head during the first 5 when I was not here, and has also done many more Copies than I have, we are counted equal, altogether, so I suppose I shall get a prize of some kind.

Dispassionate reasoning would seem to prove that Warner was certainly entitled to the first place on the above showing, but it did not matter in the least to either of us as our places in the VIth were already unalterable. My dropping five weeks out of the term, however, had already begun to tell its tale, for in the same letter as above:

I had rather a disappointment in my last Copy; the last one I shall do in the Twenty. I made up my mind to get it "sent up," and so it would have been only in the last line over which I had rather hurried, there was an unaccountable mistake.

Am I writing for present-day boys? Well, perhaps at this stage. To them it may be well to say, with the orthodox preacher: "Oh, my young friends, take warning from this awful example of neglected opportunities! Read this next letter and beware; but before reading it, understand that what was called the Vth form verse and prose involved two prizes, for which all in the Twenty, Vth and two divisions of the Lower Vth could compete, and there used to be considerable excitement over the result. As stated in the letter of the 20th April, the competing copies had then been sent in. Now mark what happened."

RUGBY, *June 16th 1867.*

The Vth Form verse and prose is now a thing of the past; it was read out last Thursday: I did not get either; worse than that, I did not even get a second for either. Stuart Wortley

got both; at least he got the prose and was equal first with Kynnersley for the verse. Gray was second for the verse, who never beat me for a copy in his life; and Browne quarts. was 2nd for the prose, who is not even in the Twenty, but rather low down in the Fifth.

So much for my stopping away and doing nothing last term, and doing these things when I was in no sort of form at all!

I shouldn't mind so much having been beaten by Warner or anyone of that kind, but Browne quarts. whom I never even heard of before, is terrible! One consolation is, Warner is in the same predicament as myself. I beat him for the verse by being next to Gray, and he beat me for the prose by coming next to Browne quarts. Another consolation is that Browne quarts. must have got his prose done by some Sixth fellow in his House, as no one can ever get an idea of doing it until he is in the Twenty. I made two horrid mistakes in the verse, and one horrid mistake in the prose. This was the effect of my staying away, as I never do such a thing except in the first Copy or two of a term. The worst of it is that I know I could have got it if I had been in practice, and that I could get it now, if it came over again—at least I mean the verse; I am not quite certain of the prose.

I always hated my own verse for I could see it was not my best, but was still unable to make it better; the last part I knew was good, for I was beginning to get more into the swing. The whole thing was too long. I could put just as much sense into about half as many lines now.

When I look at Stuart Wortley's and Kynnersley's verses I am driven distracted by the certainty that I could do better. As a proof of that, Kynnersley never has got so many marks as I have for a copy; (he was quite an outsider, but I always liked his verses better than any of the others I read last term), and Stuart Wortley, as you know, has never since I got into the Twenty been anywhere near me for Composition. Added to that he did all his on Good Friday, the last day, which was such an extraordinarily short time that no one could have expected him to do anything. I can't think what Warner was about not getting the prose, as he is so very good at it. All together, it is most mysterious. However, I don't care much as there are heaps of the same kind of things to be got in the Sixth, and I shall be sure to get some of them as I don't intend to stop away again.

Clearly there had come a very salutary lesson over this trifling storm in a teacup which seems to have troubled me seriously. I am sure Lord Stuart of Wortley and the other successful competitors—Browne quarts. in particular

—will not mind the egotistic remarks at their expense; indeed it is plain from the terms of the letter that Stuart Wortley's performance was a very remarkable one. I remember the subject of those verses. It was "Belshazzar's Feast," and I also remember that Stevenson, with true Stevensonian solemnity, began his effort with :

Illud erat tempus quum vis Chaldaea vigebat,

but of what I or anyone else wrote I have preserved not the faintest memory.

Yet we did think a lot of that competition. In an earlier letter, dated 7th April, I see that I wrote :

Can you tell me a good motto to put on the back of my Fifth form Verse and Prose ? If you like you can send me 3 yards or so of black and blue half-inch ribbons to tie them up with. Take care it is before Saturday, as we show up the Prose then.

The result of this disappointment and humiliation—for it appears to have struck me as such—was that I stuck to school all right that year, and there was plenty of less harassing work—for example, in the Rifle Corps, which numbered eighty-six, including officers and N.C.O.'s. I have the list before me, and among the privates there are : Allison, Stuart Wortley, Kynnersley, Selous, Gallwey, Francis, Still, Parker, and others whom I do not remember so well.

We had long muzzle-loading Enfields, the bullets of which would have blown a hole the size of the palm of your hand in a man had they hit him, for they were lengthy and had a steel cup in the base which spread them immediately on impact. It is strange that any reasonably accurate shooting could be made with such ponderous weapons, more especially as you had to stand up at the first four ranges, 150, 200, 250 and 300 yards. It was not so difficult if you fired at the target as with a shot-gun at game, but after being put through position drills, and made to screw the left elbow down, and stick the right

one up, I, at any rate, found that I was nothing better but rather grew worse. Selous was a good shot with a saloon pistol, but I don't think he ever made much out with those rifles. Stuart Wortley, on the other hand, was one of the best, next to Humphry.

One evil feature of the rifles was that if by any chance you had loaded again and the shooting ended before you could have a final shot, it was no easy matter to draw the charge. Once it happened that Stuart Wortley and I were walking back home from the butts, each with his rifle loaded, and as there was no one near we decided to fire them off.

I loosed mine into the trunk of a big elm-tree about fifteen yards off, and the bullet blazed an immense mark where it penetrated.

Stuart Wortley discharged his weapon into the base of a big sign-post at the roadside. The bullet went clean through, ploughed up the earth several feet on the other side, ricochetted and went audibly into the roofs of some houses at least 200 yards away. We pressed on homeward with some energy after that.

However, I shot sufficiently well that year for my third class, but I don't think I got the second, which used to be at 400, 500, 550 and 600 yards.

At another period of that year we took part in a big review in Lord Leigh's Park:

> I went to a review at Warwick last Monday and was nearly deafened. We formed square, the two outside ranks kneeling, the rest standing up. Now I was in the front rank and of course kneeling—the rank behind were kneeling and so there was a rifle by each of my ears—the others were standing, so there were several rifles over my head, and you can have no idea what it was when they fired, first one after another and then all together.

Apparently I had but an imperfect idea at that time of formation in square, but the really notable event of the day was that two spectators, sitting on some rails two or three hundred yards away, were shot by a ramrod, one of

them being killed. Inspection all along the lines followed, and it disclosed that no fewer than fifteen ramrods were missing, and some rifles which had missed fire were loaded almost up to the muzzle by continuous recharging.

Later than that was the ever-memorable review in Windsor Park, when the pontoon bridge across the Thames went wrong and we did not get home until the small hours next morning. It was in this interval that Selous went shooting at swans with blank cartridge, and the Rugby Rifle Corps was nearly disbanded in consequence. However, that trouble was adjusted and we held together, being individually attested at the age of seventeen.

The uniform was of the old grotesque pattern, and I remember one of the maids at home asking my sister: "Please, shall I pack Master William's *ammunition clothes*?"

So the days went happily enough, and the blossom of the flying terms was very sweet. I was actually installed in the VIth after my sixteenth birthday, and on 26th May 1867 wrote:

> This is a day long to be remembered. What do you think happened? I read the 2nd lesson this afternoon to between 600 and 700 people. You can imagine my feelings as the singing of the Magnificat began to draw to a close, and I had to leave my seat and go to the reading desk, with an uncomfortable feeling that I should not be able to find the place. Then came the awful silence: then the hearing one's own voice; afterwards a feeling that I should not mind reading to anybody.
>
> I felt quite in a dream at the time, but two things were fixed in my memory. They were "to read slow" and "to read loud" with due regard to stops; and so I got through it beautifully.
>
> On returning I was within an ace of tumbling down the steps; but luckily saw them just in time. I burst into a cold perspiration on regaining my seat at the thoughts of such a terrible catastrophe.

It will be gathered from the above that I had taken my place in the VIth when the disaster of the Vth form verse and prose occurred. I had then got a study to myself of which:

June 2, 1867.

I am in a new study. It is much larger than my old one, and I have it all to myself, but it wants reforming sadly. My chief cause of lament about it is that there is the most delightful little Davenport, but the owner of it, who has left, has given orders that it shall be raffled for. Of course I have gone in for it but of course I sha'n't get it, and it will have to go. The paper and carpet are both very ugly and provokingly new, so that I sha'n't be able to do away with them for some time. I have just concluded "my week"; that is having to read one of the lessons on Sunday, and, in conjunction with three other fellows (one for each lesson), to walk up and down the big school, armed with a cane, when calling over is going on, so as to keep every form in its proper place. In return for these services we are let off two copies during the week, and have no repetition to learn: Very good pay, I think.

It is now "my week" in the house, during which I have to call over at dinner, locking up and prayers. So from all this you may gather that I am a most important individual.

P.S.—Tell Mr A. this is 'lowance week.

This was written on the first flush of new power and position. In point of fact I very soon let the idea of "importance" go by the board.

CHAPTER X

Our House on Fire—Doctor Temple and the Fire Buckets—The Coming of Jester—Buying Setters from Captain Russell-England—Stevenson's Ghost Story—Undiscovered Mystery—Lee-Warner baffled — Memories of Rugby — Our House Twenty—My Temporary Exclusion—Rugby Football Fifty Years Ago—Appreciation of Dr Temple—How he remembered all old Rugbeians—My Disillusion

I SHOULD indeed be groping for a dim phantom of myself amid the darkness of the vanished years were it not that the letters, which I never thought to see again, bring back the touch of renewed life. Some of the contemporary events, however, have lived in memory without the need for any reminder, and one such was the breaking out of a serious fire in our house one night in the earlier part of 1867. The excitement of it was indeed a joy to most of us. The fire was blazing under some of the bedrooms and there were stories—which were little credited—of the legs of beds going through the floor and consequent narrow escapes of sleepers.

Downstairs, amid firemen, there was infinite pleasure in being organised to pass along water-buckets from hand to hand, or to assist in carrying away valuables to safe places. The garish light and our strange varieties of undress made the scene one never to be forgotten, and amid it all Doctor Temple arrived from the School House to give us the moral support of his presence. There were many buckets full of water standing ready to be passed along, and the Doctor was always very short-sighted. Striding towards us he stepped into one of these buckets and then, staggering to save himself from falling, he stepped with the other foot into another. It was a trying scene to those who dared not laugh, and it says much for the

Doctor that he regained his equilibrium without apparent loss of dignity. Altogether the night was one of wild and ecstatic revel, and special supplies of food and coffee kept us going until the fire was got under.

It did not seem, in the morning, to have been such a merry sport. Many of our studies had been burnt out and most of them had been damaged, as had clothes, etc., in some of the bedrooms; but it was near the end of term and we all made out claims on the Insurance Company concerned, so that everything was pretty well restored by the time we came back after the holidays. I remember I got a new top hat as an item in my compensation. Moreover, by the next term I had got a new study all to myself, as already stated, and the coveted Davenport I somehow managed to retain—probably I bought it from the winner of it, after the raffle.

The next study to mine, on the left as you went out into the passage, was occupied by Stevenson, who had also got into the VIth and was very conscientious over his duties; beyond him again there was a study containing Ernest Robert Still, who entered our house in September, 1866, being then fourteen years of age. With him in his study was, if I remember rightly, R. F. Johnson. They were not at that time in the Upper School, but Still, in particular, I should have mentioned ere this—indeed he is already mentioned in the Prologue—for he became a close friend of mine as the terms passed on.

A letter which now comes to hand seems to suggest that I should here narrate Stevenson's ghost story, though it may be rather premature. The letter which was written during that winter term says:

> I did not go to Stratford after all but had a good hunt instead, which was in my opinion much better. Jester arrived quite well, and very pleased to see me. He is in lodgings at a shilling a week. "Hunt" means following hounds on foot.

Jester, I may say, was my young fox-terrier dog by old Jock out of Cottingham Nettle, and he was destined to gain

great fame as a stud dog in the subsequent years. He lived with Knight, the Rugby pastrycook, of whom more anon.

Another letter, written 15th December 1867, says :

I shall probably, as I suppose Mr Arrowsmith has told you, bring two dogs home. They are partly broken, and 9 months old. I am going to see them to-morrow week.

22nd Dec. 1866.

The dogs are called Russell and Ruin. I have seen them and like them very well. They have only just got over the distemper, and consequently are not so well feathered as they might be. They have no white about them like the others Tom Palliser went to see. I am sure I don't know how I shall get my luggage and dogs home. I have taken a precautionary measure of buying two strong collars and chains.

The two dogs were young Gordon setters, which I bought, for five pounds each, from Captain Russell-England, who even then had snow-white hair and looked precisely the same age as he has done ever since. Ruin turned out very well indeed, but Russell was useless—except at dog shows.[1]

I quote these extracts because they are the first records of dogs in connection with our life at Rugby, and most of my friends became dog-owners as time passed on, as will presently appear.

Now touching the ghost story. It happened that, greatly daring, I had introduced a terrier—probably Jester—into the house one evening, and had him with me in Still's study. There were others present who can verify the story, and Still himself is now a Commissioner for Oaths. The terrier soon began to challenge game under the floor, scratched violently in a corner and became greatly excited. Clearly there were rats underneath, and without more ado we pulled aside the carpet, prised up two boards, and down rushed the dog pell-mell. We heard a wild scurry below and a worry, worry, worry; then all was still, and the next thing was how to get the dog out. The ground was nearly four feet below the floor, as we found by trying with a broom-handle, and someone

[1] His portrait appeared in *The Field*.

would obviously have to get down and lift Jester to the surface, for he was standing over rat-holes in some far corner, and we could not even see him. A small boy named Arbuthnot was brought, and him we let down through the floor, with a candle to enable him to see. He found two dead rats and handed them up, and then secured Jester and restored him to us; but in looking round, before he himself ascended, he saw that there was a brick out in the partition wall between Still's and Stevenson's study. This he reported to us, and it was the *causa causans* of Stevenson's ghost.

Whose was the first idea of the ghost it matters not. The details were quickly worked out. Jester was handed through one of the outer windows to Knight, who was waiting outside, and, once rid of him, we proceeded to serious work. The rats were also thrown through the outer window; and then a rug was put down through the floor and Arbuthnot, once more descending, with his candle, reclined on the rug. He was provided with half a broom-handle and a long paper funnel; and signals were arranged by which he should know when to operate and when to stop. These signals were simply the whistling of two different tunes. A third tune meant that he should put out his candle.

All this being settled, we replaced the boards in Still's study, and the carpet over them, then, leaving the door wide open, with the lamp burning, repaired to my study on the other side of Stevenson's. The first signal had been given and Arbuthnot, having poked the broom-handle through the aperture in the partition wall, proceeded to rap solemnly under Stevenson's floor. We could hear him—poor chap!—jump up with a sudden exclamation, and then, as instructed, Arbuthnot groaned through the paper funnel, which he had also passed alongside the broom-handle. In another moment Stevenson had rushed into the passage, and, seeing no one in Still's study, came at once to mine. He was much agitated, and we affected to think he must be dreaming, but went with him to his

study, at his request, the signal to " cease firing " having been given. We stayed there five or ten minutes and then departed, telling him not to be so foolish, and nothing more was done that night, for there had not been time enough to elaborate the scheme fully. The following night, however, we had arranged that the rapping and groaning should occur when we were in Stevenson's study, if he summoned us there, as doubtless he would, when disturbed. All other preparations were the same, and again Stevenson called in our aid. With overweening scepticism we followed him, and then perhaps overdid the semblance of surprise when raps came under our feet : but the carefully prepared impromptu was that we should offer at once to tear up the floor of Stevenson's study and inspect what was beneath. He gratefully accepted the offer, and assisted in this haymaking of his own room. Arbuthnot had, of course, been signalled to put out his light, and though we probed all about and looked down under Stevenson's floor there was, of course, no suspicious object to be found.

Then we assisted to replace the floor and the carpet, Stevenson still thanking us for our kindness, and we were just about leaving him—ostensibly—when again, as signalled, came rap, rap and groans under the floor.

Stevenson sprang on a chair in absolute horror, and we all showed such alarm as we could fabricate. Someone ran to bring " Mindar," the house butler, and he came with much assurance, as if he would soon settle the trouble, but when he stood in the room and there came a rap and groan under his feet, he too sprang aloft and said : " Ooh ! I s'y, you know ! " Then he beat a hasty retreat.

Stevenson hurried off to bed, and the following day had to be given another study for the time being.

The study continued to be intermittently haunted, and defied the detective powers even of Mr H. Lee-Warner, who, like " Mindar," thought that he could soon solve the mystery. The fact of Still's door being open and the light burning in his study quite disarmed suspicion of

that apartment, and, in point of fact, no one ever did discover the originators of Stevenson's ghost. Many fellows thought they heard it in various other parts of the house for long afterwards. Such is the power of imagination.

It was, no doubt, thoughtless and unkind to do this thing, but what boy is not thoughtless and unkind? The ghost was certainly one of the best I ever heard of, and it was worth anything to see good old "Mindar" skip in alarm when he had come to lay it. Better still was the defeat of Lee-Warner, who was supercilious in his confidence that he would soon find out all about it.

There is a fascination about these ancient reminiscences of life at Rugby which I fear may be leading to prolixity, but who is there without an abiding delight in his old school? Never has one taken such pleasure in seeing cricket as when we used to watch the school Eleven playing against I. Zingari or other elevens, and very fresh in memory is the effective left-hand bowling of David Buchanan, a famous old Rugbeian, who was great in those days. The cricket ground, at the far end of the Close, was—and doubtless still is—a first-rate one, and there, away beyond the left corner, was the racket court, to the walls of which I saw Pauncefote hit a ball not once but several times. On the near left-hand side the Pavilion showed its record of past elevens painted on the match-boarding; and one used to look with special interest at the name of Hughes ("Tom Brown"). Close to the Pavilion, the Island, with high trees and a few inferior swings and gymnastic arrangements.

Then, nearer to the School House, was the Big Side ground, devoted in summer to numerous minor cricket matches, and in winter sacred to football. On the right of that, the lower ground called the Pontine Marshes, where punt-about with numerous footballs was the favourite form of brief exercise between schools or before dinner, and here it was, and on the ground nearer the Chapel, that "Below Caps" and other unimportant football games used to be played in the afternoons. Then, too,

who does not remember the Three Trees in the vicinity of which fierce strife used to be waged when Big Side or House matches were played? The school buildings at the back of the school goal had one particular feature, and that was the entrance-door to the staircase up which you used to go to the Doctor's room, when wanted—but all these things are familiar to thousands besides myself, only to me they come out of a past that had been half-forgotten.

I see that I was in our House Football Twenty that winter of 1867, and evidently thought much of it.

Thus, on 17th November of that year:

> On Tuesday we have a house-match which will decide whether we are to be one of the two best houses, so it will be rather exciting. . . . Only fancy how delightful it will be if we are one of the two football houses! The Twenty will be photographed in "costume," and I shall probably get my flannels, which is being allowed to wear flannel trousers instead of ducks—a great comfort, in more ways than one.

Pride, however, went before a fall in this matter, for a few days later, on 24th November, I wrote:

> A most peculiarly aggravating thing happened yesterday. We had to play the Evanites (1st Twenty) in the morning at 12.15. About 10 o'clock Haslam (our Captain) asked to speak to me, and I went to his study. There he said: "I've not put you in the first Twenty this match, not through any fault of yours, for I know that, as far as play goes, you are fully worth it; but the Evanites are very heavy, and we shall want for this match weight. So as Stuart Wortley is a great deal heavier and stronger-made than you, I have put him in instead. We must have weight for this match." This was certainly unpleasant, though, of course, it was some consolation to feel that it was not my fault and that I retired with honour, beng unable to grow heavy.
>
> But it was disagreeable to watch the match and not play in it; and, of course, the generality of fellows, not in our house, did not know that it was not for bad play that I was dismissed. Even the old Doctor, when I went to him to have some Copies looked over, during the match, exclaimed with surprise: "Why! how's this? I didn't expect to see *you* here; why aren't you playing?" However, our House got the best of it though not sufficiently so to decide the game which will have to go on another day. I was in no amiable humour.

All ended well. The "Evanites" were finally beaten —thanks, it may be, to my absence from our team. I was restored to my place for the next match—I don't know at whose expense—and there was a deadly struggle with the School House, as to which the following :—

22nd Dec. 1867.

I am sorry to say we are, after all, only second house. After playing the School House two days, and neither side getting any advantage, on the third day of the match, for about three quarters of an hour we had the best of it, and succeeded in driving the ball into their goal. Unfortunately, after this, Haslam got hit on the head and was obliged to stop playing. Of course, they then gradually shoved us back and sent the ball into our goal twice and were considered to have won.

Yesterday, the two houses (the School House and ours) played the School; but the School had got so many old Rugbeians down that they were rather too strong. The ground was one vast lake of mud, and my trousers, up to the knees, were plastered half-an-inch thick. I had to cut the laces of my boots all the way down.

Last night was the Hall Supper, which went off very successfully. I made a speech proposing the health of the old Rugbeians.

Nowadays, when football is played everywhere, the above details may seem of no account, but they do serve to show how keen was the interest in genuine Rugby football at Rugby fifty years ago, when nowhere else in England was the game understood—still less appreciated. If it was played anywhere else than at Rugby, I, at any rate, never read or heard of it. In a letter written just before the one last quoted, it appears that I remained in the House Twenty. Haslam was clearly a diplomatist in thus making amends for the temporary disappointment, and I know that Stuart Wortley also remained in the Twenty, though someone else must have gone out, doubtless with courteous explanations from Haslam. Evidently we made mountains out of molehills during that happy time of life, but I can truly say that between Stuart Wortley and myself there was never the remotest touch of jealous rivalry, though neither he nor I would relish

W. Allison
C. B. Stuart A. K. Coles E. R. Still
Wortley and "Fret"
and "Vic."
F. Holden and "Pepper"

being superseded, even by the other. The incidents related here have probably long since been forgotten by him, as they had been by me until I read my own letters recalling them.

By the time under notice I had come to understand the sincere, if rugged, good will of Doctor Temple, whom I liked more and more as the terms passed until he left us, in the winter of 1869, for the see of Exeter. It used to be a difficult thing to keep awake on Sunday afternoons in chapel after a dinner which tended to repletion, but the Doctor wakened us up with his sermons, into which he put so much real grit that often and often the tears would roll down his cheeks from his intense feeling of what he preached.

Many years later I interviewed him, when he was Bishop of London, and was not surprised that he did not recognise me, for I knew he was so short-sighted, but when I mentioned my name, he said: "Oh yes, I remember your voice perfectly," and I quite believed this.

About ten years later still, I was at a "gaudy" (a dinner) at Balliol College, to meet him, then Archbishop of Canterbury, and other old Rugbeians. It so happened that I sat next Warner, and when our good old headmaster, as black-haired as ever, was on his legs speaking, it seemed as if the clock had been put back and we were at school again, first and second in the VIth form, but a glance at Warner dispelled the illusion, for he was bald-headed.

The dinner ended, and I was staying the night in college, but I felt bound to go and shake hands with Doctor Temple before leaving, so approached him, and again I could see his eyesight failed him. "Allison," I said, as I held out my hand.

"I recognise your voice at once," he replied, and I went away quite satisfied that he really remembered me—for had I not been three years in his form, and was I not second in the school when he left Rugby?

So far so good, but another old Rugbeian who had never got beyond the Lower Middle School was also one of the

party and staying in college. He forgathered with me over a whisky-and-soda after this dinner, and said: "What a dear old chap the Archbishop is! Such a memory too! Do you know, he remembered me by my voice!"

Now it is almost a certainty that Doctor Temple, at Rugby, can hardly ever, if at all, have seen or heard the voice of this old Rugbeian, unless indeed some punitive incident brought them into contact.

Needless to say that, after hearing my friend's remark, I was not so complacent in my belief that I was really remembered, though no doubt I was, had the good old man taken time to think instead of treating me to the formula with which he found he made all old Rugbeians happy, whether he remembered them or not.

CHAPTER XI

Blair Athol's first Runner wins—The Fairfield Sale, 1868—Blair Athol in the Ring—Foreign Buyers—Mr Blenkiron beats them all—The Fish Fight at Whitby—How Sir Harcourt Johnstone was defeated—" King " Hudson in York Castle —Our Dogs at Rugby—Their Life with the Pastrycook—Horrible Story of a Bagged Fox—Fags and their Duties—A Duplicated Supper—Moberly's goes one better

SO long as Jex-Blake remained at Rugby I never really lost interest in work, and the year 1868 passed reasonably well, so that details of it are needless, as regards the school life. At home, however, there was a great event on 21st April—for on that day Fitzwilliam, the first two-year-old runner by Blair Athol, made his debut at Thirsk and, with odds of 6 to 4 on him, won the Mowbray Stakes in a common canter by five lengths. He was ridden by Tom Chaloner, and I shall never forget the unadulterated joy which I felt as I saw him win, for I loved Blair Athol, as did many another Yorkshire man and woman. What a brilliant augury this was for his future success at the stud !

In point of fact it was not so brilliant as it seemed, for Fitzwilliam, who was a bloodlike dark bay colt, took a dislike to racing after that first race, and never won again. A year later he was in the hands of Blakey, a most capable breaker and rough-rider at Coxwold, who schooled him well over fences and rode him to hounds from time to time, but he was a faint-hearted beast and sadly disappointing.

However, Blair Athol was not dependent on Fitzwilliam for his early stud fame, for he had other two-year-olds that year, among whom Scottish Queen and Ethus were notable. Scottish Queen ran only twice as a two-year-old,

and she did not win, but she was second to Pero Gomez for the Middle Park Plate, beaten half-a-length, with Pretender, three lengths away, third. In her next race she was second for the Troy Stakes to Belladrum, beaten three-quarters of a length. Thus she was right in the top class, as also was Ethus. But I was not a race-goer that year except in holiday time, and the most momentous event which I can recall from personal knowledge was the sale of the Fairfield stud on Saturday, 12th September. Mr Arrowsmith and I attended that sale, and it was a really great one, for Jackson ("Jock of Oran") had spared no expense in getting together a stud worthy of Blair Athol. He himself was in a rapid consumption, and that was the cause of the sale, but he was at the ring-side in a carriage, nevertheless, and witnessed the dispersal without any outward sign of regret. Jackson was not *persona grata* to Mr George Hodgman and some others, but be that as it may, he was a pathetic figure when I saw him at the sale, with the beauties of his stud passing away one by one, and the shadow of death clouding over himself.

There were foreign commissioners not a few present: Count Szápáry, buying for Hungary, Count Renard for Germany, and Colonel de Butz, who, I think, represented Austria.

There was also Mr Chirnside, who took a good many lots for Australia, but none of these was any match for Mr William Blenkiron, who, in a carriage on the far side of the ring, bought whatever he wanted and was not to be denied. I write only of what I remember, and specially I can recall the fine Touchstone mare, Terrific, covered by Blair Athol, who made 600 guineas, and her filly foal by Blair Athol made 300 guineas. Mr Blenkiron bought them both, and the foal was Bicycle. The unborn foal was Struan. The very next lot was Tunstall Maid, by Touchstone, covered by Blair Athol, and for her Mr Blenkiron gave 1000 guineas. Her foal in the coming time proved to be that good horse, Jock of Oran. Another

wonderfully good purchase by Mr Blenkiron was the famous mare Woodbine, by Stockwell out of Honeysuckle, covered by Thormanby, for 650 guineas. Her filly foal by Thormanby was knocked down for 310 guineas to Mr Chirnside, but never left England, for it was Feronia. When it came to the stallions, Mr Blenkiron, who had dominated the position so far, would not be denied over Blair Athol, in whom he had an intense belief. The bidding seemed extraordinary then, and there was a gasp of amazement when the best of Stockwell's sons was knocked down for 5000 guineas. I thought it wonderful—even for Blair Athol; whereas now, what a trifling price it would seem! Needless to say, this sight inspired in me further zeal for the future of the great horse with whom it was my destiny to be a good deal mixed up in after years. At that time, however, the sale of him was a function which inspired in me feelings almost of awe, and yet thankfulness that I had been there to see it.

The dark mottled brown Neptunus followed Blair Athol into the ring, and a good sort of horse he was, but the contrast was too severe and Lord Wenlock bought him for 360 guineas.

Mr Arrowsmith and I went back to Thirsk greatly edified by the happenings at that sale, the total result of which was over 22,000 guineas.

More than once since then have I seen the Fairfield stud, when the late Mr R. C. Vyner had Minting and other horses there, and the box and yard built for Blair Athol had been little if at all altered, but the glory of the place seemed to have departed when Blair Athol was sold on that day in September, 1868, and Mr Vyner was never so successful as his careful study of breeding entitled him to be.

Count Szápáry, whom I have mentioned as bidding at that Fairfield sale, was, I almost think, Count Ivan Szápáry, who once rode in the Grand National and is known to all English and Irish breeders of bloodstock.

The war has not embittered anyone against such as him, though he must be regarded as an enemy.

It was some time during the summer of 1868 that I was staying at Sleights, and as Whitby is only three miles away and a by-election was being fought there, I naturally went to participate in the sport. The candidates were Sir Harcourt Johnstone (afterwards Lord Derwent), Liberal, and "King" Hudson (the "Railway King"), Conservative. There was normally a considerable Liberal majority in Whitby, and it looked as though Sir Harcourt Johnstone, though always defeated in his efforts to win Thirsk, would at last be returned to Parliament. The financial position of the "Railway King" had been considerably shaken by events which it is needless to detail here, and, in an evil moment for his opponent at Whitby, it happened that within a week of the polling day he was arrested for debt and taken off to York Castle.

This regrettable incident created a feeling of profound indignation among the people of Whitby, for, rightly or wrongly, it was regarded as the work of the Liberal agent, who had thus got rid of the opposing candidate. The nomination day was close at hand, and sooner than let the foe have a walk-over the Conservatives hunted wildly for another candidate. They succeeded in unearthing one in the shape of Mr Bagnall, an ironmaster, hailing from Goathland way. He had no political ambitions, but allowed himself to be thrust into the breach, and appeared in due course on his side of the hustings with the Conservative agents and committee, Sir Harcourt Johnstone and his supporters occupying the other half of the wooden erection, which was near the railway tation.

By this time their indignation had vexed the Whitby people "even as a thing that is raw," and I who was present soon saw that there was to be plenty of fun, but did not anticipate the shape it would assume. It happened that there had been a very large catch of fish, and the boats were unloading at the quayside not far away—thousands

of herrings, codfish, haddocks, halibut and many other sorts.

A wave of simultaneous thought passed through the crowd, and they had no sooner approached the hustings than away most of them ran and possessed themselves of fish—some even filled their pockets with herrings, others took codfish as more formidable weapons, and the business on the hustings had hardly commenced when the Liberal half of the erection was bombarded with herrings. It was a strange and diverting spectacle, and the fun grew fast and furious when Liberal stalwarts among the crowd took to hurling fish at the Conservative side of the hustings. This quickly gave rise to a free fight, and here the men who had armed themselves with codfish found good cause to rejoice in their prudence, for a codfish held by the tail makes a really effective weapon, though some of the combatants reversed this method and, gripping the fish firmly by the gills, slashed their opponents with the tails. There was a considerable amount of laughter and good-humour prevailing while this Homeric battle was waged, but many were in deadly earnest, and it is needless to say that the speeches of the candidates and their friends fell on deaf ears. The formalities were got through as quickly as possible, and the noise of conflict, which had been too fast to last, soon died down ; the crowd dispersed and nothing remained as evidence of the unexampled strife except a litter of fish all over the place. This was quickly gathered up by children and others, and the " fish fight " had passed like the baseless fabric of a vision.

But the resentment which had inspired it remained, and on polling day Bagnall was returned by a considerable majority, this being, it was said, the only time that a Conservative had ever been elected to represent Whitby. It is needless to add that Sir Harcourt Johnstone had no sort of complicity in the scheme by which " King " Hudson was removed from his path, and it is probable that this was not an electioneering move at all, but a quite independent proceeding on the part of creditors who did

not wish their debtor to obtain the protection of a seat in Parliament. Be that as it may, the incarceration of "King" Hudson certainly cost Sir Harcourt Johnstone the seat, and sent Mr Bagnall into Parliament: a result which by him was doubtless regarded as an unmitigated nuisance, for he was a busy man whom politics did not interest in the slightest degree.

That same year, 1868, the innovation of keeping terriers at Rugby became established. I have already mentioned the advent of Jester, whom I bought for £5 as a six-months-old puppy from one Holmes of Cottingham, who had him from his breeder, T. Wootton, of Mapperley, Nottingham, and a rare good terrier Jester was. I soon became possessed of others, and my friends aspired to terriers of their own, so that I had to provide them, and did so, nothing loth, much as you hear of boys nowadays doing business with one another in stamps.

An old photograph illustrating this phase of the career of some of us may interest and amuse some of the readers of this book. It shows Stuart Wortley with Vic. on the right, Still on the left with Fret, Coles in the centre with a terrier whose name I have forgotten, and Holden seated on the floor, with a rough dog called Pepper. I am standing over them almost in the semblance of a benefactor. Whether I had a dog there or not is lost to memory, but if I had, he does not come into the picture. We used to keep these terriers with Knight, the pastrycook, as already stated in the case of Jester. Knight had the peculiar privilege of being allowed to wheel his barrow of jam tarts and such-like about the Close when matches were on, and I often wondered if the other fellows would have patronised him as they did had they been possessed of our knowledge. The dogs used to live in tubs under the shelves on which he rolled his paste, and on a shelf above were pots of jam intermixed with pots of mange or other ointment for dogs. Knight showed no favouritism as between these various pots, and if he had occasion while making tarts to rub ointment on the skin of one of the

dogs he would not hesitate to do so, nor would he break off, for that reason, from continuing to roll paste and make his tarts. Often the dogs, when released, would jump on to his shelves and take a passing lick at the jam-pots or pastry—but what mattered it to those who did not know?

Many happy afternoons we had with those terriers, mostly beyond the Water Tower farm, for in that direction we could get away without being observed. Sydney Parker, though not in the photograph, was possessed of a nice little bitch named Touch, bought by me for him from Wootton of Mapperley, and as Jester would hunt hare or rabbit as truly and persistently as a beagle our small pack soon got together and developed a certain amount of proficiency.

We went so far at last as to purchase a fox that was advertised in *The Field* as "freshly caught" and for sale. The plan was to turn him down, give him ten minutes law and then hunt him; but the poor brute had evidently been in captivity for a long time, and when released from the bag in which he had been carried about two miles from Rugby, he simply sat and looked at us. Of course the terriers were yelling to be at him, but he cared not, and then someone with a whip drove him away and followed him over three fields. Then we let the terriers go and they at once followed eagerly on the line, but alas! the poor fox had again sat down and they ran into him at once and killed him. That was an adventure of which we were all ashamed, though the idea, most genuinely entertained, had been to give the fox a sporting chance. Never again did we hunt anything but rabbits or hares, and, needless to say, we accounted for very few of them.

It may rightly enough be thought that proceedings of the sort mentioned were very blameworthy when one was in the VIth and supposed to set a good example and keep order; but I never could reconcile myself to the Arnold tradition, which made little gods of the VIth form, and I fear my duties were wholly neglected. Never once during my three years in the VIth did I set any other fellow

an imposition, still less cane him, and often on catching sight of recreants who were "out of bounds" I used to go down another street so as to avoid meeting and having to punish them. This may have been due to a selfish desire not to disturb my own equanimity. Who can say? The origin of motives is almost unfathomable.

I got on very well with my own fags, but there again I saved myself any chance of worry by always choosing among my gang, when we distributed the house fags, one who was good at games and really too good to be an ordinary fag. Him I appointed Saturday night fag, and his duties were simply to see that the others did their work properly week by week, and also to make sure that Saturday night supper was sent in all right from Hobley's or Jacomb's, when also he would partake of it with the rest of us.

The constant mention of these suppers in my letters, and also of hampers wanted, would lead a casual reader to think that we were a greedy crew, but in point of fact we were only hungry, the ordinary food then given being quite insufficient. I quote from two letters (undated) written during 1868;

Yesterday was somewhat amusing. Stuart Wortley had gone to Leamington, and before going had, unknown to us, ordered a large repast at Jacomb's for the night. Still and I, unaware of this, ordered another sumptuous one at Hobley's; and the result was, we had salmon, lamb, green peas; duck, green peas; one ice pudding—another ice pudding—an immense dish of strawberries, and, of course, plenty of iced claret cup. We managed it all however well enough.

Doubtless there were at least half-a-dozen of us concerned in this Gargantuan repast, which one might think would have satisfied any youthful requirements, but it seems to have paled into insignificance in the light of another experience, mentioned in a letter written a week or two later;

Last night Still, Stuart Wortley and I went to supper with our friends in Moberly's house. They had a most gorgeous enter-

tainment, far surpassing anything we have ever had in our house —in fact, all the delicacies of the season, and several excellent drinks, the best of which was Cider Cup. All this, too, was done quite openly in their large tutor room, and not cramped up in their studies as is the way with us.

And yet, if memory serves, the suppers "cramped up" in our studies were the happiest and most convivial functions after all.

It must not be thought that we carried on without any sort of intellectual effort. There was a Debating Society in our house, and on 3rd November 1867, I wrote :

On Thursday night I brought forward my motion in the Debating Society—that Modern Literature is superior to Ancient, and lost it by a minority of one.

Then on 10th November, the following week :

I found to my great delight that my motion "That a cat tax would be beneficial" was chosen for debate, and having gathered wisdom from my defeat of the week previous, I did not, as before, rely upon oratory without giving the subject a thought. The consequence was I made a speech of 10 minutes' duration :—"Were my beds to be usurped and filled with fleas ? Were my victuals to be seized, my game destroyed ? Was my repose to be disturbed ?" etc. etc., and concluded amid great applause. An animated debate then ensued, which ended in my motion being carried by a majority of four.

So much for our intellectual pursuits, and enough of this chapter.

CHAPTER XII

Long Absence from School—The Assistant Masters—Dislike of them—Dr Hayman elected Headmaster—Automatic Rise to Second in the School—Football Fancies—Effect of Absence—Try for a Christ Church Studentship—Matriculate at Balliol—Farewell to Doctor Temple—My last Big Side Match—Life under Dr Hayman—Go As You Please—Æschylus in a Dress Coat—Last VIth Dinner—Grand Military at Rugby—Patey outwitted—Our Dogs and our Convenience—Long-distance Running—The Harborough Magna Run—Also the Crick

I AM sorely tempted to multiply stories of Rugby, but they would occupy too much space, and it so happens that I absented myself from the school during at least three-quarters of 1869, always, however, providing myself with certificates from Doctor Ryott. Jex-Blake had gone away and become headmaster of Cheltenham, and the Rev. C. Elsee reigned in his stead over our house. He was a worthy man, and, as stated in the Prologue, went by the name of "Bull," but he was a mathematical master and, as such, possessed no interest for me.

The younger masters of that period were deeply imbued with the German school of thought and learning. It would be unjust in the extreme to reflect on them now by the light of the events of this war, but it can perhaps be understood that, bred as I was in an atmosphere of old Toryism, and with full reverence for the Established Church, these dabblers in new fancies were as repulsive to me as a Nonconformist minister would have been. I hated the very name of Max Müller. I find a letter of mine written near the end of 1869 which quite explains this feeling ;

A Mr Hayman has been elected headmaster in Dr Temple's place. I know nothing of him except that he is a good scholar, High Church, and a Conservative, whereat the present junior masters are much disgusted.

This letter was written after my prolonged absence from the school, but it serves to indicate my feeling towards the junior masters, and gives the reason, though, of course, no justification, for my staying away so long, under the ægis of Doctor Ryott and his automatic medical certificates.

During all that period I never looked at a book or in any way troubled myself with school work. Tom Scott and I had commenced dog-showing at Darlington and elsewhere in the north. There was hunting, shooting and racing. I had a nice little blood mare called Miss Miggs; my sister had one by Flatcatcher called Brunette. There were seaside visits, and altogether there was a gay, thoughtless and irresponsible time, until suddenly, a fortnight after the winter term had begun, I resolved to go back to school, and did so.

I was welcomed and commiserated with for having been so long ill, and some allusion to this appears in all my later school certificates; but there had never really been any ill-health at all, and it seemed rather appalling that my place in the school had by this time risen so that I was second, Warner being head. This surely would prove the absurdity of rising by mere seniority; but, strange to say, it did nothing of the sort, for I could never gather that the other fellows, who had been grinding away while I was playing the fool, had made any progress whatever. Indeed it is certain that they had not, for in the yearly examination at the end of that term I came out second, which was my exact place by seniority.

It is clear, however, that on my return to school I thought far more of football than anything else. Thus, in one of the first letters of that term, I wrote;

I shall get my Cap all right, I've no doubt. I got my flannels yesterday; that is, I am permanently fixed in the House Twenty and allowed to discard the old Ducks. This is, of course, the first step, and I could not possibly have ascended it sooner than I did, as Caps and flannels are only given after House Matches, and we have only had one as yet. I have played five times during the last week and twice on the Saturday before, but feel much better

for it though I am 10 lb. lighter than I was when I left home. The VIth actually beat the School this time.

Those two matches "the Saturday before" were my first after that long period of idleness. One was in the morning and I was captain of our "Below Caps" Twenty against another house, and it was a pretty fierce game. In the afternoon the VIth against the School commenced, and there were either three or four days of it before it was finished. We also played the House Match referred to, and altogether it was a somewhat crucial method of getting fit from a state of absolute unfitness.

On the top of it all, and without any sort of preparation I took it into my head that I would go in for a studentship at Christ Church, as four were falling vacant, and I find the following letter of about a fortnight's later date :

I shall be going to try for a Studentship at Christ Church. There is no doubt that I ought to get one ; but unfortunately I cannot work like I used. Lee Warner (our tutor) remarks that I shall have thrown it away if I don't get it. However, let things take their course—I have got my Cap—and been to the dog show. That's all I care for at present.

In another letter of the same period there is the following :—

Everything is much changed since I was here ; several new schools have arisen. All the masters have married. There have been no less than five weddings. The new schools are hideous erections in my opinion. . . . The continued toil and early rising of this place is very irksome to me.

Then came that visit to Oxford, as to which I wrote :

I came back from Oxford yesterday, having been there since Monday. I have not heard the result yet but shall do so to-morrow. There is not the slightest chance of me having got one now, as, though I was in the first lot of six, the examiners couldn't make up their minds, and so settled to give a mathematical paper to decide it ; and, of course I left them when they became so unreasonable as to let mathematics have anything to do with a classical studentship. However, it doesn't matter in the least.

W. Warner C. B. Stuart Wortley
H. Lee Warner (*Tutor*) W. Allison
Rugby, 1869

I enjoyed myself very much—saw the river and many torpids, but not the Eight, which, I believe, is a very bad one, as Tinné, Willan and Yarborough, members of last year's crew, have apparently decided to give Cambridge a chance and are not going to row. The demand for dogs is so great that Tom and I are at our wit's end how to supply it.

So ended that first Oxford adventure, and very thankful was I afterwards that I did not become a Christ Church student, though I was in the final six competitors and there were four studentships to fill, but the mathematical paper was prohibitive so far as I was concerned, and I left it untouched. Later on comes a letter with better news :

I arrived back here on Friday evening having matriculated successfully at Balliol. This you must remember is by no means easy to do, as their standard is very high, and it is necessary to show a certain amount of mathematical skill, which I just managed to do, with a caution that I must improve in that particular. Old Dr Scott, the master, told me they should expect me to read for Honours, which will be very laborious.

It is rather interesting to note that I matriculated before the beginning of Jowett's Mastership of Balliol, which was in 1870. The Doctor Scott referred to was of Liddell and Scott fame.

Towards the end of that winter term, 1869—viz. on 10th December—is a letter showing, in a slight degree, what we all thought of Doctor Temple :

The Doctor preaches his farewell sermon this afternoon which will be a very terrible ordeal. Our House-supper comes off on Tuesday. I shall have to make two or three speeches.

The following Ode, written and composed for the occasion of Doctor Temple's farewell, will bear repetition, as many old Rugbeians will have forgotten it :—

ODE

Solo and Chorus *Rhoades and Oakeley*

MASTER, best beloved and best,
Ours for ever, as to-night,
Hands at parting may be press'd,
Tears reluctant dim the sight,

But where'er thy name be known,
Rugby hails thee first her own.

Yes, she hails thee loud and long,
Ere the kindly hour departs,
Once again with shout and song,
Evermore with loyal hearts:
Hearts too full to sing or say
All their love and loss to-day.

Much thou'st taught us: see! we keep
Noblest of thy counsels, one—
Not to waver, not to weep,
Where there's duty to be done.
Staunch we stand, oh! Master, see,
Ready e'en to part from thee.

Wider fields await thee now,
Richer corn-land, bleaker fen;
Forth to sweeten and to sow
Haste, oh, chief of husbandmen!
Where thou treadest still to bring
Days of happy harvesting.

England, take from us to-day
One more man of mighty mould:
Could we think to cheat thee? nay,
Such thy hero-type of old;
Strong and tender now as then,
Joy of youth and tower of men.

Must we lose him? must he go?
Weak and selfish thought away!
This at least 'tis ours to show,
This our praise shall all men say—
Whereso' honoured, lov'd and known,
Rugby hailed him first her own.

December, 1869.

Comrades, I bid you weep:
Save this, there is no solace left to show:
In all fair harvests that our hands shall mow
Henceforth the master-reaper will not reap.
Idle it is 'gainst adverse fates to strive,
And with vain effort still keep grief alive;
There is a time for tears too as for sleep—
Let your tears flow.

Brothers, I bid you sing,
Because Truth fails not though the great go by,
And those frail souls that win to her on high
Abide unvex'd by vain imagining:
Low at her feet the white waves howl for hate,
She is so calm, and they so passionate:
Let us be glad together for this thing—
Truth cannot die.

Children, I bid you pray:
So, though we look not on his like again,
Maybe his memory will our heart sustain,
And some pure portion of his spirit stay:
This too he taught us, and 'tis no light gift
To souls sore-blinded by the tempest-drift,
That who on heaven's high succour wait alway,
Wait not in vain.

Once more, I bid you "peace."[1]
How should weak song put sorrow out of sight?
There are who clamour at love and curse the light;
Silence alone is holy till they cease.
Yea, O our Master, for ourselves and thee
Sweet is the silence, since joy may not be:
God of thy day's work give thee fair increase,
And a good night.

December, 1869.

In the same letter as quoted above I wrote a description of what was really my last Big Side football match:

I played football once more yesterday, in the Two Cock House Match. The two houses had got numberless old Rugbeians down, and playing 85 to our 42 amid perpetual rain, hacked us almost off our legs. However, thanks to Arnica, I am all right.

I have a very vivid recollection of that huge phalanx of opponents as we went out to face them in the pouring rain. Within ten minutes all our side were plastered with mud from head to heel, for they swept over us like an avalanche. The curious point was that they never got a goal during two hours' play, being, no doubt, incommoded by their own numbers.

Speaking of one of these overpowering rushes through a scrummage, I wrote :

A fellow nearly got killed, in fact it is not expected that he will recover. He was playing in a scrummage with his head down to see the ball, and the whole of his side fell forward, and his head was doubled up under his body so that his face touched his chest. A crack was heard and he was carried away insensible.

His spine is all but broken in two, and he is paralysed from the chest downwards. If he does not die he will never recover the use of his limbs. His name is Lomax and he is third in the school next to me.

It makes one rather shy of being under a falling scrummage now.

If I remember rightly, however, Lomax recovered from that accident, and I trust he is still alive and well, though, like so many others at a big school, he passed out of my ken.

It may perhaps be understood that with the departure of Doctor Temple I lost the last link which really bound me to any attempt at serious work, and the advent of Doctor Hayman started an unruly epoch of the school, which to me was not unwelcome. I wrote in the early weeks of 1870 :

I like the new Doctor very well—at least he has not yet made himself disagreeable. The masters have subsided and become subservient to him, as he told them they might all go if they liked and he could easily fill their places with others.

This will give some slight idea of the difficulties which confronted Dr Hayman. He was not a great man but quite a good sort, and he would have got on well enough had not the under masters opposed him in the way they did. He once described them as "a pack of insolent ushers" and it was a pretty good description.

Many of us in the VIth sympathised with him, and for my part I regarded the trouble almost from an electioneering point of view, until I believe I got myself as much disliked by the masters as was Dr Hayman himself. Then

came a desire to let them see that I could do without them and would be beholden to none of them while reading for the Exhibitions that summer. This was the sole motive power of my effort in that direction, and the result we shall see presently.

There was only one Speech day in my time, with Dr Hayman as headmaster, and of that I wrote :

> Our speeches come off on the 1st July I am condemned to act the part of Æschylus in a play of Aristophanes (Greek). Fancy how horrible to talk Greek in dress clothes on a sort of short-legged table in the midst of numbers of people! I shall be home in time for Darlington Show and we shall have lots of dogs there.

Then, in a later letter :

> Our speeches came off on Friday. I performed the part of Æschylus with some success and received a prize value £3 for Latin hexameters from the trustees of the School.
>
> Dr Hayman made an excellent speech at the beginning—so excellent that none of his enemies could find fault with it. Among other things he spoke of "the excellence of his assistant masters,"[1] which certainly heaped coals of fire upon their heads.
>
> After the speeches there was, as usual, the VIth dinner. This time we had it in a tent on Dr Hayman's lawn. Warner was not there, so I presided and had to make speeches, call upon people to sing, etc.

These episodes, however, are too near the end of my time at the school to come in proper sequence here, but I give the extracts, as they throw a pretty clear light on Dr Hayman's position and in some measure perhaps serve to explain how I, by becoming a strenuous adherent of his, was able during those last two terms to do pretty much what I liked.

All Rugbeians of that period and a good deal later will remember Patey, the school marshal, whose duties were never very clearly defined, but he used to come in at first lesson in the mornings and report all who had been absent from "calling over" the afternoon before. In many other ways he was supposed to exercise some sort of supervision,

but Dr Hayman never appreciated his importance. In this connection the following letter is rather illuminating. It was written in the spring of 1870, a few days after the Grand Military meeting over the old Rugby course on 17th and 18th March, where Mr P. Merton won on the Robber, and Lord Charles Ker on Knockany. E. P. Wilson also rode a winner or two, as did Colonel Knox, and "Bay" Middleton rode once or twice :—

We have had great amusement this week. The grand military steeplechases have been going on, and we have lost all our money and feel better for it. I have sold the large-eared pup for £2, 10s.

We were discovered to-day with our dogs by Patey, the School Marshal, who announced his intention of getting this business settled. After much thought, we decided that the best thing would be to anticipate Patey in going to Hayman, and tell the Doctor the facts of the case and complain of the insolent conduct of Patey. This we did with perfect success. Hayman thought nothing of our having dogs, and quite agreed with us that the wretched Patey had behaved in an improper manner, so that this individual will get what he has not bargained for when he goes to tell his tale.

Poor Patey! It was really a shame to deal with him in this fashion, for we had been utterly in the wrong. It was a Sunday afternoon when the incident occurred, and our dogs had just caught two rabbits. An angry farmer had intervened, and it was at this juncture that Patey appeared on the scene and declared his intention of "getting this business settled," but Dr Hayman fully agreed that our position in the school was such that Patey had no right to interfere with us. Moreover, that same week Patey had noted our presence in the enclosure at the Grand Military, when he was prowling around outside to find out who was there. Of course we were not at calling over that afternoon, and when next morning he came in with the list and handed it to the Doctor, those whose names were marked were, as usual, asked for their explanation. My name came first, and I at once said: "Late." Then came Stuart Wortley. "Late," said he. Patey thereupon broke out: "You were *not* late; you were

at the races." Hayman, however, took no notice of this except to say: "You had better distinguish between the words, 'absent' and 'late,'" and nothing further transpired except that Patey was evidently very much annoyed.

Some weeks afterwards the Doctor said to me: "I think it might be well if you were to send your dogs home —at your convenience." A "convenient" period did not come until the end of the term.

In that spring of 1870 I discovered that I could run long distances rather well. It was a complete surprise, for when overgrown and weak at the private school I had been hopelessly incapable of doing anything of the sort, and I have often thought how many two-year-olds must have been turned out of training though they would have made good horses if given time to develop.

Anyhow, after a preliminary trial in a House run which did not trouble me in the slightest, I essayed the Harborough Magna run, a distance of about nine miles, and came in first by thirty seconds, with the greatest ease. Pride, however, went before a fall, for in the same week, only three days later, I consented to run as one of the hares in our House Crick., having, during one of the days gone over the course with F. S. Holden, so as to be quite sure about its every detail.

Now the Crick run is decidedly formidable. The distance is about thirteen miles, the last five of which are on the road and known as "the spurt." Certainly it is not a run to take on when you are stale, as I must have been that day, after the Harborough Magna. My fellow-hare was John Marshall Dugdale, who later on became so well known in the agricultural world and was famous as a football player. He was a good runner, and very fit and fresh, not having taken part in the Harborough Magna. Well, we made the best of our way across country, never taking a pull except to get over fences, until finally we reached the road and presently had compassed two miles of that—say eleven miles in all—and then I began to feel as if for me the end

was very near. This came on suddenly, and I had never felt the same before, but it was unmistakable. Just then Dugdale said: "We are miles in front of the hounds. Is it necessary for us to race into Rugby?"

This was a splendid chance for me to agree to ease down, but by that time I had almost abandoned hope of getting to Rugby at all, let alone racing there, and so, to keep him in suspense as long as possible, I said: "No; I think we ought to race!"

So he resigned himself to the continued effort, for about another two hundred yards, and then I told him to race home by himself—I was going to walk.

He jogged on with a relieved expression, but for me to walk was easier said than done, for no sooner had I stopped for a moment than it became desperately difficult to avoid reeling into the ditch on one side or the other of the wide road. I was just like a foundered horse, and almost in despair, more especially when, glancing back; I saw a white figure half-a-mile or more behind but striding along fast.

This I took to be one of our own hounds, and the idea of being not only beaten for time but being actually caught and passed seemed so dreadful that somehow or other I staggered and blundered into another run and bored along in dire distress, every now and again casting a glance back at that pursuing figure. He was overhauling me all the time as inexorable as Fate, but I am sure the effort I managed to screw out would never have been forthcoming had it not been for him. I was within half-a-mile of Rugby now and could hear his steps behind. I gave up looking and still struggled on until whoosh! he passed me as if I was standing still, and called out: "You're all right. Your fellows are best part of half-an-hour behind you."

It was the great long-distance runner, Charlie Bulpett, training over the last three miles, and I, poor wretch! had been trying to get away from him after going the full course.

Thank goodness; all the same, he hunted me home as

he did, for I should not have got there otherwise. I had now reached Rugby, but it is a "long unlovely street" down which you finish the Crick, and people come out and look at you so that you must make some sort of show—"a trot for the avenue." How I did that I know not, but I did, and when I saw the lamp-post which I took to be the finish I made one supreme effort to get there in decent style. Then came the awful discovery that not this lamp-post but the next was the finish! It seemed miles from one to the other, but fellows ran alongside—I remember seeing Warner among them—and shouted encouragement, so I got there, practically blind.

Someone gave me a drink of whisky, which was a boon indeed, and just in the nick of time. I recovered within ten minutes, and found that after all Dugdale had not finished two minutes in front of me.

We did respectable time, about 1 hour 25 minutes, and the hounds were badly beaten; though not quite so badly as Bulpett had anticipated.

I always have felt that I ought to have had another try at the Crick when in proper condition. It was, of course, madness to run it so soon after the Harborough Magna as I did, and presumably in these more coddling days no boy would be allowed to try himself out in such a fashion, but it happened in my day just as I have written.

CHAPTER XIII

Life at Coxwold Vicarage—Terriers and Game-cocks—Criticism of other Terriers near Rugby—Training for the Sports—Beaten for the Half-mile—The Exhibitions and the Assistant Masters—Kingcraft and Champagne Bottles—High-pressure Reading for the Exhibitions—Merely to annoy the Junior Masters—Radicals and Free-thinkers—Troubles of Stevenson—Our Farewell Banquet—An Exhibition won—Invited to give it up—Thoughts after leaving Rugby

SOME time before my later days at Rugby my sister and I had left Kilvington and gone to live at Coxwold Vicarage, where we spent several very happy years. We had our horses, and I was allowed to build kennels there. Moreover, I secured ideal shooting at Oldstead, extending up the Hambleton hills as far as the Hambleton Hotel, where sometimes Tom Green would be found, and sometimes James Dawson, brother of the more famous Mathew, Tom, Joseph and John Dawson. James Dawson was a very capable trainer, but he had the misfortune to find an employer who was financially unsound, and so he never made much headway. How the good old parson at Coxwold ever endured the habits of that time has long been a mystery; for fox-terriers had always to be thoroughly tested, and among other means to this end a freshly caught badger was established under the charge of an old woodcutter in one of the outhouses of Shandy Hall, not two hundred yards from the vicarage. Life was decidedly more barbaric then than now. Tom Scott and I kept game-cocks there and did many other things which might seem reprehensible, but the world went very well with us, and so came along the early half of 1870, when my erratic sojourn at Rugby was drawing to its close.

It may be gathered from internal evidence that the loss of all our money at the Grand Military meeting that spring, as recorded in the preceding chapter, led to the appeal to Mr Arrowsmith for £15, details of which are given in the Prologue. The backing of Kingcraft for the Derby followed, but it was before the 2000 Guineas, and we only got £20 to £5. This would not appear suggestive of any of us winning Exhibitions that summer, but for my part I had determined to give the junior masters an object lesson which would annoy them, as I knew any success of mine, unaided by any of them, would do.

Nothing, however, is said of any serious work in the following letter to Tom Scott written on 9th April 1870 :—

I went to Hill Morton Paddocks yesterday and saw first about five pups, 6 months old, by young Jock. None of this lot were first class, all having huge drop ears, and they were very large. Then came three pups of the same age, by Venture out of Fernie; one of which was almost *all* tan, having very little white on it. Another was a miserable small thing; and the third was a pretty good one, though with several spots on its sides, and not nearly so good as I expect Venom's will be. The man wanted £20 for it. Then came out young Jock and Fernie. With the former no fault was to be found, but it is strange that, for all that, he is exactly like his photograph in my album, with the same curious hind-quarters and stern somewhat thicker towards the end. I should say he is about the best dog, barring his father, that is at present shown.

The man had a badger, and said they would draw it, but as they could see it through the bars of the box and almost touch it, and still took no notice whatever, I rather doubted what he said, especially as he had no appliances whatever for trying them.

Fernie I saw really for the first time. She is a most surprising bitch, very much like Vic. (Stuart Wortley's) only a great deal *bigger, broader* and *fatter*, though you could hardly believe it. She had, moreover, a short, stumpy and tremendously thick tail, with a head much the same shape and colour as old Vic.

. . . . . .

They seem to have got a very good programme at Thirsk this year. You will find that Nil Desperandum will win a race, if started. Ptarmigan ought to have a chance. I see Woodcraft, Kingcraft's dam, has just had a chestnut colt foal by Blair Athol. She is, of course, going to be put to King Tom again.

Loud were the execrations against Mr A. when I received your letter. I really could not select anyone, as there is not one that is more my friend than another. Hence you will see I cannot make a distinction.

The athletics begin to-morrow. I have very little chance, being too slow. I won a trial with Stuart Wortley on Friday. I ran once round the Close (1000 yards) and then he began and I raced him round my second time and won easily; so I am thankful I can beat someone. I go this 1000 yards in 3 min. 5 sec., with all clothes on, which is not first-class time, still I can make it faster when necessary.

What are the pups like? How are their ears? Have you seen the Setters lately?

Do you think Cobweb has capped his hock permanently? Sabinus was shod with the Goodenough shoes. I expect they really are much better than the old ones.

Has the badger been drawn lately? Have there been any fights or anything of interest?

About this time I could sell heaps of dogs if I had them; about like old Vic. I have, however, made about sure to sell two puppies at good prices.

There is no sign in the above of any strenuous work for the Exhibitions. The terriers referred to were famous prize-winners, of whom Fernie was supposed to be a champion. Nil Desperandum and Ptarmigan, the horses mentioned as likely to win, were both by Blair Athol, of course, and Ptarmigan did win at Thirsk.

Woodcraft's Blair Athol foal was Andred. As to the athletics, I had an abiding fear of Bulpett over the longer distances, for he was really first class, and here, in a letter to my sister, is what happened:

RUGBY, 10*th April* 1870.

We have had the best athletics that there have ever been here. The mile was done in 4 min. 39¾ sec. which is extraordinary time for a school. The half-mile was also very good, 2 min. 6 sec. I only went in for two things, the half-mile and putting the stone. In the half-mile race I was fourth out of sixteen. It was, as I expected; the pace was too great for me, as from the beginning I was obliged to run as hard as ever I could to keep up. This was all very well for a time, and the first time past the Pavilion I was about 5th, and the second time past, 2nd, and not the least

done ; whereat I thought I was going to win, as there was not more than 150 yards to go. But then other fellows began to run at their best pace, which seemingly was better than mine, for though I felt as strong and fresh as possible I could not prevent two passing me in the last few yards. The first four were all together, not one of the rest came in at all. . . . I put the stone 30 ft., which was not good enough to win, though there were many worse.

I can only say in regard to the above, that I now very much question whether the distances were correctly measured, for we ran on grass and had no proper running shoes or shorts. Bulpett, who won the mile, was amply good enough to make the time recorded ; but hardly so under such conditions.

It would be six weeks later when Kingcraft won the Derby, with the consequences set out in the Prologue, and it is difficult to believe that any good work was, in such circumstances, being done for the Exhibitions. I have on my left hand now the mark of a bad cut received while knocking the neck off a champagne bottle one evening, when the carousal surpassed the Kingcraft celebration. Such proceedings in a school study seem almost incredible, but these things happened.

And yet, hostility to those assistant masters was my motive power for the coming trial, and a few weeks before the examination began, we were allowed to sit up an hour or two later at nights. It was thus possible to crowd a prodigious amount of work into a comparatively short period. Stevenson was among the hardest working and most conscientious competitors for these big stakes. He never designedly fell foul of anyone, but he had remained unacceptable to the younger members of the house. It was quite an ordinary occurrence on those late nights, when groping one's way round the passages after lights had been put out, to feel a friendly hand arrest you, and a voice would say : " Step high, just here. There's a rope across the passage for Stevenson ! " Round a corner there would be some fellow waiting with a wet

sponge—also for Stevenson; and so on, night by night, in that arduous crisis.

Poor old Stevenson! He never did anything to deserve such treatment. I once saw him endeavour to cane a boy called Peters in the passage in daylight, but the space was far too narrow for such an operation, and Peters stuck close to him and kicked him on the shins. Once, too, Stevenson endeavoured to "impeach" Warner before the VIth form for some purely imaginary insult, but in the main, he was a singularly inoffensive being, whose chief trouble was that he had no sense of humour. I have often thought, in later years, how unfairly he was treated. Once on a breaking-up morning, when the powers of the VIth had—until next term—expired, I saw two fags set about and belabour Stevenson. They had no real grievance again him, only he was Stevenson!

It is not easy to work hard and long when you have accustomed yourself to idleness, but I thought of what those masters would say if I failed and how incensed they would be if I succeeded. The sudden and continuous strain told on me, and I began to go amiss. A letter written in July, 1870, says:

> The terrible exam. for the Exhibitions impends, and I am not in good form for it. It is now necessary to give up swimming, etc., and it does not appear conducive to health. However, there are little more than three weeks now and then it will be over.

This period of almost ceaseless effort passed, and a later letter says;

> The Examination is now at hand, inasmuch as it begins to-morrow. A more horrid thing I never knew. I leave here on Thursday week. On Wednesday week Stuart Wortley, Warner, Lawrence and I give a farewell banquet to some eighty persons, which will, I anticipate, be amusing. We have succeeded in inducing the famous Babington—the best speaker of the kind that can be imagined—to come all the way from Marlborough, where he is a master, to propose our healths, so that will be well done.

So we were near the finish, and the examination lasted some ten days, commencing at 7.30 each morning—a

two-hours paper before breakfast, another after breakfast, and another in the afternoon. It was well for me that the examiners were appointed by the vice-chancellors of the universities and were not masters of the school. The Exhibitions were given at the rate of five each year, and of values varying from £80 to £40 a year, tenable for four years. The subjects for examination were Divinity, Classics, Mathematics, Modern Languages and History.

It is something in the nature of torture to be really strung up for such a lengthy test as this was and to carry on right through it. There are some who can stand it with equanimity, but to me it meant being unable to eat or to sleep, except to a very limited extent, until the thing was over; and then there was relief—for I did not doubt that all was well—and that "Farewell Banquet" came as a blessed change. "The famous Babington" made a speech worthy of his fame, and the function was a very successful one all round. Then came the news that the results were out—Warner had got the first Exhibition, I secured the second, Darcy Bruce Wilson the third, Stuart Wortley the fourth, and Stevenson the fifth.

Thus for me there was £70 a year for four years, and the pleasure of gaining it was almost entirely due to the feeling that I had scored off those Radical assistant masters. Warner well deserved his place, for he was a good all-round man, whereas I did not attempt to touch the Modern Language and Algebra papers. I was well in front on the Classics, but not by quite a sufficient margin to make good these shortcomings.

It was conveyed to me indirectly, a few days later, that some of the recalcitrant masters—"insolent ushers"—thought I ought to give up my Exhibition in favour of someone who really needed it, which, financially, I did not; but this intimation only increased my pleasure in what I had done, for it seemed to show that the iron had entered into the souls of my adversaries.

Such motives and sentiments may have been very unpraiseworthy, and perhaps unjustifiable, but they

certainly impelled me to win that Exhibition and to stick to it when won.

And this was the end of my career at Rugby. I can hardly recall whether I was sorry to leave the old school or not, for my time there had passed in a confused medley of sorrow, occasional effort, intermittent folly, much good-fellowship, hopeless irresponsibility, but happy memories not to be effaced.

The last act had been in a sense one of direct hostility to the assistant masters, and them I certainly was not sorry to leave, but as the years passed, all such bitterness faded away, and love for the school crept increasingly into its place. It was long before I could bring myself to revisit Rugby, where several of the "insolent ushers" were still in authority, but a time did come when I made excuse to go and see some polo ponies at Mr Miller's place, and from there walked into the old Close. There was a cricket match of some importance going on, and everything was strangely familiar, just as if I was still at school; but not a soul of the many I met knew me by sight, and I went on to the school buildings, and then up the spiral staircase, on the right of the front entrance, to the VIth form school, which was just as I had left it.

No one was there, and I sat down in my own old seat on the right of the Doctor's chair, with the one vacant seat for Warner above me. Yes, I thought of Rugby then as I had never thought in more flighty days, before the burden of life had really touched me.

With a sigh, I came away, and so on to our old house, into which also I entered. It was a holiday afternoon and no one was about, so I walked round the passages and had a look at my own study, then returned and into the hall, where I saw my name was still in its place on the wall.

Still no one appeared, and I departed as if from an abode of shadows and memories, all of which were very happy ones, even amid an atmosphere of regret.

It may be thought that I have put too much of the *ego*

into these episodes of school life, but it must be remembered that the *ego* was one about whom *I* who write can now deal quite impersonally. We are living in spacious and stirring times, when a record of the trifling career of a boy is perhaps out of place; and yet I think that from my life, as thus far disclosed, there is much of what Mr Jorrocks would have called "good avoidance" to be learned by youngsters of the present day. True, I cannot be blamed for being left at such an early age with a guardian who was no guardian and a doctor who would always certify that I was ill. The circumstances were peculiarly trying; but we know that boys have now taken to the responsibilities of life much earlier than they did then, and many have been at the front and many have met death at an earlier age than I was when I left school, being then nineteen years old.

The trend of strenuous events now is towards the quicker development of character, but nothing will ever alter the lesson which I have ventured to illustrate in some measure —viz. that mere ability and talent may be wasted—wasted almost utterly—unless some sort of reasonable respect is paid to the opportunities which may be granted us for developing those qualities. A flash-in-the-pan effort now and again may seem brilliant and even achieve its immediate object, but it is not the real thing and does not carry on.

I am going to show before the end of this book that, so far from a love of bloodstock and racing having injured my career, it has proved to some extent my salvation.

Of the famous men that were at Rugby in my day I cannot but again mention Selous, who, after a life that will never be forgotten, sleeps well under one of the battle-fields of East Africa, where he met with a soldier's death in the cause of his king and country. I have mentioned also Lord Ranksborough, and of him it should be added that, as General Brocklehurst, he was in command of the Cavalry Brigade at Ladysmith, which is enough for the fame of anyone, though it is but one of his many

notable public services, at Tel-el-Kebir, in the Soudan, and elsewhere.

William Amias Bailward was also a good friend of mine at Rugby, and, later, at Balliol. He, since the early eighties, has done a vast amount of good public work in London.

Another contemporary of mine, though only for the last year or so at school, was John Simons Harrison, whom I did not get to know well at that time, as he was younger and in another house, but we have been intimate friends now for many years, and no one knows better than I do how much he has done for the good of our bloodstock breeding and the horse industry in general. Such services are of vast importance, though seldom recognised in England at their true value to the nation. In other countries of the world the man who is a real expert in horse breeding and supply comes in for State recognition, but in England rarely, if ever. Horses are supposed, by the "unco guid," to be instruments of gambling, spreading a vicious miasma over all who have anything to do with them. Hence it is that on the outbreak of war we are always woefully short of horses.

CHAPTER XIV

Racing in 1870—Contemporaries at Balliol—H. H. Asquith—Lord Randolph's First Election—The Master—Life in College—On the River—Boxing with Tom Evans—Billiards and the Proctor—Morrison's Fours—"Billy" Farrer—Supplanted by Lord Elgin—Hunting preferred to Rowing—Hack-hunters—Charlie Symonds—Tollitt—Birmingham Dog Show preferred to "Smalls"—Bob Colling, the Elder—Concerning his Wedding

THAT summer of 1870 passed pleasantly enough, and there was real delight in seeing the white-faced bay two-year-old, Tullibardine, by Blair Athol, win easily at York August Meeting. The bookmakers and crowd generally put the accent on the last syllable of his name, as in the verb, to dine. He was the property of Mathew Dawson and, at that time, a colt of much promise, but he did not train on. A few years later I recognised him in a hansom in Pall Mall, and had a ride behind him. At that same York Meeting I saw Bothwell win one of the two-year-old races. He was a low, lengthy, level, bay colt, with plenty of quality, except for his plain head. He was a really good one, too, and beat Sterling fairly and squarely for the 2000 Guineas the following year, with King of the Forest an indifferent third; but, after that, Bothwell went wrong in his wind and did no more good.

In those times there used to be sales of horses on Knavesmire before the races, and sometimes sales of dogs. At one such sale I bought for £2 a Clumber spaniel named Dash, who was not only a champion in his work but proved to be a sure prize-winner wherever he was shown. Why his original owner, Major Stapylton, sold him was always a mystery.

Of course we visited Doncaster to see Kingcraft run, and of all the Derby winners I have ever seen, not one was; or is, better-looking than Kingcraft—a perfect model of a horse for almost any purpose. He started a hot favourite and right up to the distance he had the race at his mercy, but Hawthornden, a narrower and more wiry sort, was a staunch battler, and Kingcraft, when challenged; showed no liking for a struggle; so he simply fainted out of the race and allowed the son of Lord Clifden to win. The sight of this annoyed me not a little, for after winning that £20 over Kingcraft's Derby I had been inclined to idealise him. The first race of the afternoon had been far more agreeable, for the Blair Athol colt, Ptarmigan, won it so easily that it was decided to start him in the St Leger also. For well over a mile he set such a cracking pace and gained such a tremendous lead that people shouted; "They'll never catch him," but Legers are not won in that way, even by an Orme or a Kennymore—and, of course, Ptarmigan came back to his horses shortly after passing the rifle butts. Kingcraft was kept in training a good many years afterwards, but he only further and further discredited himself.

Very shortly after that St Leger week I commenced my life at Oxford, and of those who were freshmen at Balliol with me it seems incongruous that H. H. Asquith, our recent Premier, should have been one, but so it was beyond all possible question. W. H. Mallock was another of that same term, but for him one always had more of an affinity. Stuart Wortley and Warner had both come with me to the same college, as also did Bailward a year later. Then there was James Hozier (now Lord Newlands), one of the very best, whose proficiency in modern languages gained him a nomination a year or two later to the Foreign Office.

Another good friend was C. C. Rhys, now dead, but destined to gain fame as "C.C.R.," "The Pote" of *The Sporting Times* in its best days. Then I come upon the name of Almeric Fitzroy, now of Privy Council repute.

Lindsay Smith and W. Allison,
Oxford, 1872

Almeric Fitz-Roy,
[Sir]
Oxford, 1872

He was always one of my good friends, and his only trouble was that, not having been educated at a Public School, he was at first puzzled how to deal with examination papers, for he had enough knowledge to answer the questions so voluminously that he could not get through them in the time. E. L. Vaughan, now a master at Eton, also came up that term, as did H. D. Rawnsley, now a canon and poet, but then an athlete of considerable prowess. There was Sackville Russell, clad in such uncouth garments that I gave him the name of "Sackcloth" Russell. Poor fellow! He became Marquis of Tavistock and Duke of Bedford, and died in 1893. A. H. Page was an 1870 man, and he is now Dean of Peterborough. Wilson had come on from Rugby, and a new friend turned up in E. F. Vicars, so immensely tall that when he first came into a lecture-room someone quoted *Alice*—"No one more than a mile high is allowed in court." We all liked Vicars. He was subject to fits of savage indignation over trifles, and that alone was amusing, but there was really true friendship for him on his own account, and many who had not seen him for years sincerely regretted him when he died, not along ago, at Eastbourne.

Harking back to the 1868 undergraduates, I find among them W. M. Sinclair, an excellent friend of mine, who became Archdeacon of London, but he too has passed over. Another who came up at that time was Richard Ord, who is now so widely known as a handicapper.

In 1869 there arrived the Earl of Elgin (of whom more anon), R. H. Benson, the great long-distance runner; Edwards-Moss, now Sir J. E.; P. M. Kidd, notable now as a physician; William ("Billy") Farrer (Rev.), and A. L. Smith, now Master of Balliol.

To pass on for a moment to 1871—there came up in that year Arthur Saumarez (Hon.), C. Gore (Bishop of Oxford, 1911), Baden-Powell, F. S.; Henry Seymour King (Sir); Lindsay Smith and Rowland Prothero, who, with Vicars, had been at Marlborough. Smith is now great in the banking world, while Prothero (Lord Ernle)

is the best agricultural minister this country ever had. There came also at this time W. W. Asquith, brother to H. H., and there was Cecil Chapman, well known now as a Police Magistrate. There were many others, but I knew all the above well, barring the Asquiths, of whom I may say that W. W. is a year older than H. H., and he became an assistant master at Clifton College from 1876 to 1910.

Among an older lot, not at our college, whom I met that first term was Archibald Stuart Wortley, then just going down, and so well known afterwards as an artist and a pigeon shot. He gave his brother and me much sage advice. Another was J. A. Doyle, fellow of All Souls and a graduate of Balliol. It is seldom that a Freshman makes friends with a Fellow, but I made friends with Doyle from the very outset, and it was through me that he first took an interest in fox-terriers, of which he ultimately became one of the best judges. In the British thoroughbred he had always been interested, like his namesake, Sir Francis Doyle, also of All Souls, but fox-terriers constituted a new departure, and like everything else he did, he studied the subject thoroughly and, what is more, effectually.

Then there was Frank Parker, a brother of my friend Sydney Parker, and to him I sold a fox-terrier almost at once, for one of his friends, though he too was at the end of his University career. Lord Randolph Churchill, also, was still at Oxford, but I think it was his last term. I saw him once or twice, but no one at that time had even dreamed of him as likely to do great things in public life —unless, indeed, he dreamed such a dream himself. There were many stories about him—probably untrue—but none suggestive of future eminence, and, when a year or so later he first stood for Woodstock, some of the Radical dons went there to assist his opponent as a protest against this shocking misuse of ducal influence. However, Lord Randolph got in all right and we know how far he made good.

There is a wonderful change from school to university life, and whether the sudden change is for the better may be doubtful, but I must say I vastly preferred the Balliol dons to the Rugby schoolmasters. Not a single one of the dons was a bad sort—even from my point of view. The master—"Jowler," as he was called—I always liked, though he was an inscrutable being with a habit of saying in a few words something that deprived you of any capacity to answer.

Moreover, on a first introduction he got badly on the nerves of the nervously inclined, for he would, at the outset, look into vacancy and say little or nothing. This presumably was to draw out your powers of initiating a conversation, but it was a rather dreadful ordeal, for the fear of saying something foolish was ever before you, but when once you had broken the ice he was kindness itself. Other dons that I really liked were T. H. Green, R. L. Nettleship, J. L. Strachan-Davidson and F. de Paravicini. The last-named was a by no means indifferent horseman, and as such he was a rarity at Balliol. Strachan-Davidson and Nettleship were capital fellows both, and the latter, who died all too young, inspired in me a perhaps self-regarding esteem—because he appreciated my Latin verses.

My first rooms were on the top floor in the corner of the quad. to the left of the Master's house, and my first scout was a large, fleshy man named William, who was interested in racing, and also in providing you with a full supply of every comestible that you did not want just as term was ending. Somehow in those times one did not realise how primitive the old college rooms were. Bath-rooms were unknown, and a bath in your room with a can or two of cold water had to suffice.

But it was fine to be your own master, so to speak, and have your own servant instead of a fag. Then you could have your own wine and other drinks without fear of any higher authority, and very early did I lay in my supplies of what in my immature wisdom I deemed good,

from Messrs Badger & Sheldon, of Shipston-on-Stour, with whom I dealt during the whole of my stay at Oxford, and I hope the firm still carries on. The fact that when installed at Oxford you can obtain credit from tradesmen, and say: "Send this or that to my rooms," with the assurance that you need not pay for it until a quite indefinite period, did not appeal to me, for I had always had pretty much what credit I desired from my guardian, and did not really know what it meant to want money. This same credit business, however, must have been a serious temptation to those who had been under tight control until then.

Balliol has always been a great rowing college, and the idea of being well coached on the river was an immediate attraction. I and others were quickly fastened on as likely to do some good, and I fear that I ill repaid the trouble which the devoted boating men took over me. Even then there was another interest, as shown in a letter dated 30th October 1870:

We have begun boating and are coached every afternoon, after which we adjourn to Tom Evans and box for about an hour. He lets us box together now, and looks on complacently the while. Every now and then we have a round with him, but he does not altogether like it now as he has a bad cold and his nose is very sore. We find it good policy not to hit him there, even if we can, as he is sure to avenge himself speedily.

An outsider came in yesterday, and Tom Evans knocked him about unmercifully. Instead of saying, as he used to us: "I will now touch you lightly," he said: "I will now hit you six times," and did so before the miserable man fairly knew where he was.

We play a game or two at billiards every night and are becoming quite expert. Every night last week were we fined pence for coming in late but "no matter."

We were at a "Wine" at Christ Church the other evening, a very different affair indeed from the one here, as we did not get away till past 11 o'clock.

The most amusing thing occurred the other night. We were playing billiards at about half-past ten, of course without caps and gowns. We had just been deriding the idea of Proctors, when suddenly a seedy-looking man put his head in at the door and grinned. We thought at first he wanted the table, but soon

perceived other seedy-looking men in the passage, whilst from the midst of them there walked into the room a real live Proctor.

The whole affair at the time seemed so absurd, and the Proctor looked so ridiculous, that we burst into the most uproarious laughter, and the more he asked us if we were members of this University the more did we laugh. At last we told him our names and colleges and, having "troubled us to leave off playing," he departed in solemn state. This being the first time, we escaped with a fine of 10s.

As to being proctorised, that is the common experience of all foolish freshmen; but Tom Evans is a more interesting subject. He was a notable pugilist in his day, and a first-rate instructor at any time, especially as regards footwork. At the period mentioned he must have been well over fifty, and was certainly fat. He did not stand more than about 5 feet 6 inches, but he had great loosely coupled shoulders and prodigiously long arms. At his best he must have been very formidable indeed. I was very much interested in boxing and Tom Evans taught me a great deal, but that did not mean giving up the river —not a bit of it; and I was among the "freshers" drawn for Morrison's Fours, which is a race for Balliol freshmen, with one capable older man to stroke each boat. The strokes choose their crews in rotation from the available material, and it fell to my lot to be chosen with Wilson and Vaughan by Billy Farrer, who was an extraordinary good oar for his weight. Vaughan was bow, I was 2, and Wilson 3, and the following letter to Tom Scott foreshadows what happened :—

24th Nov. 1870.

The most aggravating thing is that I have gone and got a sort of gathering inside my hand which necessitated throwing up work for three days. We were getting on splendidly in our boat and were the favourites, but now I fear we shall be no use. We paddled seven miles in our light boat last time I was out, without any inconvenience.

I am going to essay once more to-day, having had a rapid though hardly effectual cure made of my hand by a Doctor.

I should think Fret will have a chance at Birmingham as they are judged privately and she will have nothing to frighten her.

Smalls come on almost directly, which I can hardly hope to get through as I have not done any mathematics whatever this term.

Tom Evans has been ill, so we have not had any boxing lately. He is going to give a grand entertainment on the 29th and has engaged several celebrated men to perform. You see placards about the town saying that "Professor Tom Evans begs to state," etc. etc.

. . . . . .

There is yet more than a week before our boat-race and I have been rowing since I began this letter. I fancy that I am sound again. We may yet get fit by the day, but we needed to be very fit, as we are a very light crew, bow only weighing about 8 st. 5 lb. At the same time, he is a very good man. No one in the boat weighs 11 st., and in one of the adverse boats no one weighs less. Still we are considered to have a chance second to none. I hope it may be so.

My belief that I was "sound again" at the time of writing that letter proved to be incorrect, for though I kept the affected part of my hand for hours in the hottest endurable water the "gathering," which followed on a blood blister, refused to disperse and two days before the race I had to give it up as a bad job and clear out of the boat. An eleventh-hour substitute was found in the Earl of Elgin, who was not much of a rowing man anyway and was quite untrained. Even so, Farrer stroked them so well that they got into the final heat, and then were defeated by no more than a yard by the winners. It is reasonable to suppose, in the circumstances, that had I kept all right, we must have won. Farrer is now the vicar of Bisham, near Marlow, where his favourite recreation is rowing. He was, in 1873, the first "ninth man" for the University Eight. He stroked our college boat when head of the river in 1873. He was three times in the winning crew of the University Fours, and once in the pairs. He had been in the Eton Eight in 1868, and he rowed in no fewer than fifty-seven races for Balliol, so it is needless to say that in that early experience of rowing I had the advantage of being behind a first-class man.

That I showed some sort of promise may be gathered from a letter written early in the following term, 1871 :—

I rowed in our Torpid one day last week, but probably shall not do so again, as it was only to supply the place of a man who could not row that day. However it shows that I stand next on the list for preferment.

We have just sent off some twenty or thirty pounds, collected in the College, for the Paris Relief Fund.

That was forty-seven years ago, and Paris had suffered terribly from the Huns; as France has done during the past four years. This time, however, it is to be hoped the invaders will be compelled to pay in full for their wanton and widespread destruction.

Whether I should ever have taken to the regular routine which is essential to advancement in boating is more than doubtful, but the disappointment over Morrison's Fours had diverted me into a natural preference for hunting, and so I had started on the "fearful joy" of riding hack-hunters from Charlie Symonds' or Tollitt's stables, the South Oxfordshire being the pack I at that time preferred —mainly, I expect, because Lord Macclesfield, the Master, was the father of my friend, Sydney Parker.

In those days it seemed possible to get satisfaction out of almost anything, but an Oxford hack-hunter at £2 a day was certainly dear at the price. He would be hunted not less than twice a week, and probably be hacking at 10s. an afternoon during the remaining four days, so that he earned more than his value in one term.

Old Charlie Symonds was a stout, red-faced man, of medium height, and with a peculiar twitch in his features, somewhat of a St Vitus character. He knew all that was worth knowing about horses and could sell you good ones if he found you disposed to launch out. His nephew, C. G. Symonds, commonly called "Master Charles," had the Randolph Hotel stables, and he too was doing a similar business, but of him I shall have a good deal more to say later. The general subject is only introduced here to

show how it was that hunting prevented me from going on with rowing. You cannot do both, and hunting was first choice.

It has already been shown in the Prologue how in that first term I neglected to put my name down for Smalls and went to Birmingham Dog Show instead, and in the rest of the letter making that announcement it would seem that the demand for dogs was brisk. The date is 5th December 1870:

I have had several applications for dogs, and I think some must turn out purchasers. Tartar is going to be sent to Antwerp after all. I sent them one dog which I picked up for £3, 10s. and got £5 for it—money down. They now want Tartar. May he be happy! . . . We could have won easily at Birmingham with the setter that died, as the class she would have been in was the poorest I have ever seen—though the other classes of Gordon setters were very good.

This first term was not spent in a manner likely to find favour with the Balliol dons, and in the next summer term, on 22nd May 1871, I wrote:

I am afraid I shall not be able to get to the wedding, as "Jowler" steadily sets his face against it. He would have let anyone else go, but not me. . . . Tell Lizzie she will receive a multitude of salt cellars from me.

The above extract is interesting, as the wedding referred to was that of Robert Colling, of Hurworth, with the second daughter of Mr Scott, the Coxwold vicar—it appears the "salt cellars" were changed for dessert knives and forks, and I did, in point of fact, attend the wedding. Bob Colling, so well known now as a successful trainer and good all-round sportsman, was the first child of that marriage.

The importance I attached to the wedding of his father and mother may be inferred from the care taken in selecting my present. A letter, written a few days after the one quoted above, says:

I have thought it just possible that dessert knives and forks may not be among the presents, and as I found a really good silver set in a box, I have exchanged the salts for them, with the understanding that they are to be changed again if unsuccessful. I shall bring them with me, and can take them back if necessary. I am sorry about the salts. They are very perfect ones. But dessert things are, I suppose, about as useful. The salver is the next thing to fall back on. It is a very fine one, but not of a good size, being a good deal larger than the ordinary small ones, and yet not really a large-sized one.

I shall have to go back on Thursday, in fact am stretching a point in coming away before one o'clock to-morrow.

We have got on much better this term in the way of baffling the Dons, but they will too surely encompass us in their toils at the end of the term, when they are going to examine us in half our work for Moderations.

How I got leave to go to the wedding may be told in another chapter.

CHAPTER XV

After Dinner with Jowett—Nervous Apprehensions—The Dervorguilla Society—Leave granted to attend the Wedding—Rats at Butler's—Hunting a Badger—Swinburne after Lunch—Drum Major and how he won at Haxby—His Defeat at Myton—Buying Angram for Lindsay Smith—Drum Major and Angram at Oxford—A Run with the Bicester—Henry S. King and the Fistulatrix—Drum Major disappoints—Attempt to raffle him—A Serious Word or Two

IT was a custom of the Master of Balliol to gain closer knowledge of the individualities of youthful undergraduates, by inviting this or that one to come to his house after dinner and have a chat. This meant sitting with him in solitary state in his dining-room with a bottle of wine on the mahogany table, a dish of biscuits and two plates. The anticipation of such a session was in my case somewhat nerve-racking, and it was before I got my leave to attend the Colling-Scott wedding that I received an invitation to go to the Master's house after dinner. All the serious papers, such as *The Saturday Review*, *The Athenæum*, *The Spectator* and others were read by me at the Union Club that afternoon. There was an abiding fear of being tried and found wanting in subjects that any reasonable being should understand.

Most people will fail to realise what it means to have "nerves" over the mere prospect of having to sit and talk to a benevolent old gentleman of cherubic countenance, but I know I suffered from nerves very badly when I was ushered into his presence and sat down at the table side on his left hand. Beyond saying "Good-evening," he made no further observation but passed the wine, which, to the best of my recollection, was indifferent sherry.

I helped myself with shaking hand and tried to think

of something to say. There was the awful fear that in a moment of aberration one might mention the weather and receive some withering retort. I can only remember those few seconds of intense nerve strain, but of what I did actually say I have not the faintest recollection. I only know that we were soon talking quite easily, and all my apprehensions had vanished. He even unbent so far as to jest about the Dervorguilla Debating Society which some of us had just formed—at least I was one of the original members—Fitzroy was the leading light in it. The jest was that perhaps Periham would be a better title than Dervorguilla for the society, and that is a jest which no one but a Balliol man will understand. Be that as it may, the Dervorguilla is now the oldest of Balliol College societies, and was so named after Dervorguilla of Galloway, wife of John de Balliol, these two having been the founders of the College in 1263 and 1284.

Now there is no further need to point out to anyone who reads with inside knowledge that the Master and I had somehow got on quite well in desultory conversation, and before an hour had passed I had told him how I had no home except at Coxwold Vicarage, and that the daughters of that house were to all intents and purposes my sisters. One of them was to be married and I was most anxious to be there on the day if it could possibly be permitted. He agreed at once that I should go, on condition of hurrying back again, but added that the bride "ought to have been a nearer relation."

Now he actually said this to me. I have heard many stories ascribed to him of a similar sort, mostly about men wanting to go down for a funeral; but my story is bedrock truth, and that is how I got what in these days we should call my "permit," to go to the wedding of "Bob" Colling's father and mother. It seems almost wonderful to have lived through all these years.

I put "Bob" Colling's name in "quotes," for his father, Bob Colling, is alive, and was a contemporary with the late Marquis of Queensberry at Cambridge, together

with Tom Milvain. All of them were more than useful with the gloves at that period, and for a good deal later if occasion demanded.

I had got through Smalls all right in my second term, and all was going well—or appeared to be so. The craze for fox-terriers was on the increase, and others besides the Rugby fraternity participated. I provided Vicars with a nice little bitch named Violet. Arthur Blackwood, another new friend, became possessed of Blister, just a fair sort of dog, but given to cat-worrying at inopportune times, and there were many other dog-owners. Most of us kept them with an old man named Hedge, somewhere between the Schools and New College. Hedge was the maker of a certain lotion which he declared was a sovereign remedy for all injuries to horses or dogs, and we came to look upon him as a high authority on racing because he occasionally went to Woolcot's at Beckhampton, taking bottles of his lotion, and used to come back with what passed for stable information.

It was quite enough if he had only seen a horse leave the stable to go to a meeting. "I seed him go," he would say, "and he won't be far off winning."

The terriers used to live in barrels in a yard at Hedge's, and he did them well; but his racing tips were usually of the worst. There came a time when he saw Gang Forward pass the station on his way to Doncaster, and told his friends that there was the Leger winner, but Gang Forward never started for the race and Hedge's repute as a tipster from that time began to wane.

There was a man in a part of Oxford, near Port Meadow, who kept hundreds of rats in large cages in his back yard, and his kitchen was so fitted that a convenient rat pit could be made in one of the corners, where two boards, about four feet deep, hinged to and folded against the walls, and could be pulled out and joined together at the outer angle, thus forming a square enclosure, of which the walls furnished two sides. Rats at sixpence each were supplied in any numbers that you might desire for the

Arthur Blackwood and Blister,
Oxford, 1873

W. Allison and Vixen,
Oxford, 1873

trial of your dog, and Mrs Butler, a tall, gaunt female, would pick them out of the big cages without putting a glove on. It was a gruesome sight, but no terrier was thought worth keeping in those days until he or she had been thoroughly entered to business of this sort. Occasionally Butler would become possessed of more formidable prey, such as a polecat, and that was a costly luxury. Once a freshly caught badger was provided and we arranged what was thought a good scheme for hunting. I drove out with it in a sack to somewhere beyond Woodstock, and having got a boy to hold the pony, carried the sack with the badger in it a considerable distance across country and then enlarged the quarry. A drag made up of the badger's bedding was meanwhile being trailed towards the point where I was, and when I saw the man with the drag coming I met and stopped him two or three hundred yards short of where the badger had been released, and had apparently made good its escape. We lifted and carried the drag well away from the line and then watched until presently the terriers — about a dozen of them — came in sight, running keen as mustard; then their various owners; and when the pack threw their heads up where the drag had been lifted it was really interesting to see them cast and try to hit off the scent again.

"Whativer ye de, always cast forrard," was the advice given by James Pigg, of immortal memory, and someone followed it on this occasion, so that at last they got on the actual line, but the badger, though in his native country, had not gone far, and they ran into him all too soon. It was, after all, not much better than our shocking fiasco with the bagged fox at Rugby.

This may not be a pleasing story but it serves to give some idea of the manners and customs of that period.

It must not be thought that some energy was not devoted to more worthy objects, and, on the whole, we were not progressing badly, but the attractions of Oxford are numerous indeed and it is difficult to concentrate your mind on lectures and reading.

I may say here that though the "wines" after dinner in one another's rooms were very convivial and pleasant, these were never, in my experience, carried to excess, and not even at a "bump" supper, though on these latter occasions there might be wild and perfectly natural hilarity. I never saw anyone really overcome by wine at Oxford except the poet Swinburne, and that was probably due to his ill-health.

He was staying with the Master about the time I am now dealing with, and an undergraduate named J. R. Anderson had invited him to lunch one Sunday. Swinburne speedily yielded to the inspiration of Bacchus, and went to sleep in an arm-chair, breathing heavily. Anderson became rather alarmed, and went out to consult whomever he could find. It so chanced that he met me, and I went with him to his rooms, where I saw the sleeping poet, now snoring. I advised that he should not be disturbed, and there he slept throughout the afternoon, awaking barely in time to meander across the quad and dine with the Master. What happened then I know not, but Anderson got into trouble about it, though it was no fault of his.

During the Long Vacation in 1871 I purchased a big thoroughbred horse named Drum Major from a vet. named Lamb, at Shipton, not far from York. He was by Drumour out of Presumption, stood about 16·1, and had once been trained by William Day. Moreover, George Thompson had won the Club Hunt Cup at York on him. He made a noise and had dreadful joints, but Tom Scott and I conceived the idea that we could train him round the Coxwold town's pasture, with occasional gallops on Hambleton, and possibly win even a Cesarewitch. I gave £26 for him.

The sight of him when he was brought to Coxwold struck awe into the heart of the village butcher, John Batty, who owned a famous "leather-flapping" champion named Brown Shales, for he thought of Drum Major as a possible rival, little dreaming of our higher aspirations.

"By gor! but he's a great la'nching 'oss!" ejaculated he, when he gazed at the tall, gaunt form of our supposed champion.

I have told in another book how I humoured the butcher's whim, and after a gallop in which I rode Drum Major and easily beat Brown Shales I suffered him to take both horses to the leather-flapping fixture at Haxby, where the course was down a sandy lane, and there he and his brother Anthony entered both the horses. Drum Major won his race, but Brown Shales just failed to win his. They were heat races, and after Drum Major had passed the post easily first in the second heat—as he had done in the first—the judge, who sat in a wagon and had been taking a drink and not looking, declared it a dead heat. John Batty was speechless with indignation, and said to me: "Wait till I get three penn'orth o' rum into me, and *then* I'll talk tiv him!"

However, the third heat intervened, and as Drum Major won that beyond all possible doubt, even the "three penn'orth of rum" did not prevent anger from evaporating.

Those old country "leather-flapping" races were quite good sport in their way, and nothing at all akin to the hybrid fixtures which from time to time of late years have been organised as a miserable substitute for racing under Jockey Club rules.

We were much encouraged by the form Drum Major, in a totally untrained condition, had shown at Haxby, and decided to run him at a much more ambitious meeting at Myton, in Major Stapylton's park. Having treated his joints with "neurasthenipponskelesterizo" and stood him daily in the running water that flows from Newburgh fishpond; having also galloped him and sweated him round the town's pasture morning by morning—and I rode him myself generally, for our own groom could not be persuaded to go fast enough—we finally galloped him on Hambleton with a big, raw five-year-old by Pontifex, bred by John Coates of Angram, and called after that farm. This horse had been lent to my sister on trial, and

he was anything but a promising lady's horse, but he made an uncommonly good show against Drum Major on Hambleton all the same, despite our training of the latter, and all our hopes were disappointed at Myton when Drum Major was badly beaten in each of three heats by little rats of animals off Hambleton. This dissipated the dream of a Cesarewitch, and though he had pulled up lame after each heat, his old joints were, no doubt, pretty callous, and I decided to hunt him, for he was a rare jumper.

It happened that Lindsay Smith had asked me to look out for a horse likely to suit him for College grinds, and Angram seemed a right sort, though not such as my sister wanted. I therefore wrote to tell him I would bring Angram for him along with my own (Drum Major), the next term, £100 being the price, and I arrived at Oxford with the two precious animals, which were consigned to the Randolph stables and met at Oxford station by John, the head man of "Master Charles" Symonds.

Smith was a good horseman, and it did not take him long to get on terms with Angram, who was anything but a made hunter at that time, but very free and willing to do his best. No more hack-hunters now, for we rejoiced in our own, and in one letter of this term, which must have been written in October, there is the following :—

I have had a long day's hunting to-day (with the Bicester). We had to take our horses on by train, and we had a very fast run over quite the worst country I ever was in. I saw no less than twenty people fall.

At the first fence, which was far from an easy one, someone cut in, in front of me, and I was obliged to stop and jump it at a stand. The horse fell on his head at the other side, but got up with me very well. Angram also nearly fell, and Smith got a thorn run into his eye. Thence we proceeded at topmost speed, encountering all sorts of outlandish fences—doubles, etc. After going about twenty minutes well with the hounds, I thought I could make still better out by jumping a certain fence, while the others were going round by a gate. But, to my disgust, Drum Major, deprived of his companions, refused most resolutely, and

I had to go to the gate, having lost much ground. Still his speed was so great that I did not much care.

The very next fence, two men, one on each side of me, came down, and their horses continued the run on their own accounts. The next fence, a man close by me came down and his horse broke its back. The next fence, which was a widish ditch with a sort of gap on the other side, I was going at, when suddenly, just as Drum Major rose, one of the loose horses rushed at the same place and knocked him right over into the ditch on his side. I jumped from his back, as he was falling, on to the hedge bank and from thence back into the field again. I got him out without any difficulty and was on and over within half-a-minute. We then came to a pasture field and he really set to work and passed twenty-five others before we got to the end of it, at length fairly regaining his place in the front.

We ran for fully an hour and our horses were quite done. We had to fetch them back by train from Bicester. Angram went about first all the way.

The above reads like a mixture of Pomponius Ego and Baron Munchausen; nevertheless I remember that it is true in all its main details; but it is evident that I still retained a pathetic belief in Drum Major's great speed. This belief was rudely shattered some weeks later, when Angram was now getting into shape, for Smith rode him one afternoon in a weird saddle—the property of "Master Charles"—which had a stone of lead in it, and we galloped him and Drum Major a mile and a half on Port Meadow. Angram won in a canter and gave me something to think about.

If memory serves me, King—that is, Sir H. S. King—was out with us that particular day with the Bicester, and he rode one of the few good hack-hunters, a whistling mare whom someone named Fistulatrix. Moreover, I have a vivid recollection of him going very well on her. He will remember her, I am sure.

My pride in Drum Major had had such a downfall that before the end of the term I had decided to raffle him for £40 in £1 tickets, and the advertisement of this raffle was shown in the window of the saddler, Orpwood (successor to Slark). Such a proceeding would be out

of the question in these days, and was doubtless illegal then, but at that time no one took any notice. I seem to have got pretty sick of Drum Major, for there is the following in a letter to my sister :—

> You had better have a ticket for Drum Major, £1 ; five for £2, 10s. or ten for £5, and I will give you half the profits for him back again if you get him.

My sister does not seem to have been tempted by this proposal, and though £20 worth of tickets were taken at Orpwood's, I declared the lottery off, as it did not fill. On 26th November 1871, I wrote:

> We were out hunting yesterday, but scent was bad and not much was done, though there were plenty of foxes. At the same time we had a good hunting run though very slow. The ground was very heavy and made old Drum Major pipe to some tune.
>
> I'm afraid I sha'n't be able to get through him here. He kicked Angram rather badly the other day, for what reason I don't know. We were riding quietly along the road when he suddenly gave a great grunt and a jump and lashed out most savagely at Angram. The Balliol athletics come off this week. I am in for the half-mile handicap.

Angram was my initial experience in selling a horse, and it was a satisfactory one, as will presently be shown.

That hunting term in the autumn and winter of 1871 passed very happily, for with all his infirmities Drum Major was a rare good mount, except that he would not jump water. We had days with the old Berkshire, of which Mr Tom Duffield, with amazing flow of language, was master. Mr Hall and the Heythrop also attracted us; and, of course, Lord Macclesfield and the South Oxfordshire. He was a grand old sportsman, as everyone who remembers him will agree. Hunting with him I first saw Mr A. Dendy, one of the University College dons, going in first-rate style, insomuch that I inquired who he was, and felt ever afterwards that here was a man whose lectures would be worth attending, and my fortune was to attend them some two years later.

It must not be thought that serious work was altogether neglected. I had and always have had an abiding interest in the Classics since I got fairly going with them. We live in days when materialists want no education that is not of immediate use. They are perhaps right from their point of view; but who that has ever mastered Greek sufficiently to appreciate the atmosphere and the beauty of it would give up the influence it has exercised over his mind, even though he could exchange that for a thousand items of knowledge more immediately profitable?

This vast and terrible war will be written about by historians for all time to come, yet I venture to say right here—and I use an Americanism purposely—that nothing will ever be written quite so absorbing as what Thucydides wrote about the Athenians and their disastrous failure both by sea and land at Syracuse. Enough of that, however; I only want to make it plain that sport and folly were not really weighing down the balance. There was fairly solid work in the other scale.

CHAPTER XVI

The College Athletics—Training round the Quad—The Half-mile Handicap and its Lesson—Lord Elgin again to the Fore—Change of Rooms—Vicars and Warner—The Cellar and the Outrageous Picture—Hanging the Picture—My Absence Next Day—The other Picture-hangers "sent down"—Extraordinary Interview with the Master—I escape Scot-free—Rose of Athol and the Pari-Mutuels—Prince Charlie—Boxing at Blake's—George Faber—Improvement in the Cardinal

THE last letter quoted in the preceding chapter mentions the College Athletics and that I was entered for the half-mile handicap. I never regarded this very seriously, but we were always pretty fit, what with boxing and fencing in afternoons when there was not hunting; and a fortnight or so before the time Smith used to run with me round the quad about ten or eleven o'clock P.M. over what we had made out to be half-a-mile. Probably there could be no more injudicious method of training—after dinner and wine, which latter was never knocked off—but we used to struggle desperately in those runs, for it so happened that he had a good turn of speed, but could not really stay half-a-mile, while I could stay right enough but had no speed. Thus it happened that if I went for all I was worth all the way I could beat him by a few yards; and if I relaxed even for a few strides he would always catch and beat me for speed. There was a good deal to learn from this as to what we often see in horse-racing, when, for example, a speedy horse wins over a long distance in a slow-run race. Smith and I came positively to dislike running round the quad, for though we would start by agreeing to go at a fair pace and not race we always did race when once started.

Now so little did I really think of the Athletics, being then the merest novice, that I never troubled to get shorts or running shoes, and went to run in baggy flannels, tucked into my socks, and boating shoes. I had been given a start with which I could reach the winning post in about 1 minute 55 seconds, so that really there should have been no such thing as being beaten, and here came the lesson which taught me for ever afterwards what wind pressure means in racing, and why it was that Tod Sloan's method of getting down "under the lee" of his horse was bound to beat jockeys who persisted in sitting upright.

I take the account of the Balliol Half-mile Handicap from *The Field* of that date, for it gives a good description of the conditions and what happened :

Dec. 1, 1871.

A more wretched afternoon than that of to-day could not be imagined, a bitter north wind and driving rain prevailing from the time that the competitors turned out for the half-mile hcp.

Half-mile Hcp.—Earl of Elgin, 1 ; J. A. Bryce, 2 ; W. Allison, 3 ; E. W. Estcourt, 4. [Fourteen ran, including R. H. Benson, scratch.]

As the competitors turned out rain came down in torrents, and were we to attempt a detailed account of the race we should only be practising on the credulity of our readers. Suffice it to say that 250 yards from home Allison had a long lead, but was caught in the next fifty yards by the Earl of Elgin, who, however, only held his advantage for a short distance, when Allison again went to the front. Fifty yards from home the Earl came again with rare pluck, repassed the leader and won by three-quarters of a yard ; Bryce just shooting Allison on the tape by six inches for second ; half a yard only dividing third and fourth. Time, 2 min. 3⅘ secs.

(*The Field*, Dec. 1871.)

The above account shows clearly what was the condition of the wind and weather, but people who do not know the track should understand that the run in for 250 yards was dead in the teeth of that north wind and rain. I forget what start I had but it was sufficient to make my

winning an absolute certainty, no matter who was scratch, and though one of my ridiculous shoes came off before we had gone half-way, I came round into the straight with a lead of at least fifteen yards and the race easily in hand—as I thought. Someone shouted; "Don't win too easily! Make a race for it!" and then I faced the wind and rain.

Almost in a moment all was changed. Those flannel "bags"—rightly so called for the present purpose—filled out like sails, and I was running as if in a nightmare. I was not beat—not in the least—but the wind was stopping me, and very badly. I heard loudly increasing shouts and knew that I was being hard pressed—someone passed me for a moment, but I caught him again—then that relentless wind and those awful holding "bags"—it was a desperate struggle, and it was the wind pressure only that beat me, though nominally the Earl of Elgin and J. A. Bryce did. The race in itself is too absurdly unimportant to write about, were it not that it so clearly gave me an object lesson in what the wind can do, and made me at once understand how Tod Sloan and those who rode like him were bound to beat the old "poker-backed" jockeys.

To dissipate any doubt on the subject, so far as I personally am concerned, I may say that when properly clothed and shod I beat Lord Elgin over the same course the following year by more than fifty yards, and could probably have given him 100 yards in half-a-mile.

It seems strange, however, that he should have supplanted me twice, first in Morrison's Fours and then in this absurd half-mile. However, he became Viceroy of India, and thus he finally left me in the lurch.

By that time I had changed my original rooms, and got much better ones on the second floor, next the Master's House in the inner quadrangle. Stuart Wortley had the ground-floor rooms of the same staircase, and Smith was opposite him on the same floor. Vicars was in the other quad up a spiral staircase, adjoining the Master's House

on that side, with the then College Hall between us. I forget exactly where Warner was, and this is not because friendship with him did not continue intimately—for it did—but as at school, so at college he was more peaceful than some of us were, and my memory of his acts and all that he did is consequently not so clear. Yet I have seen him incur the wrath of Vicars, as all of us did at times, and on being attacked embrace him round the knees like a classic suppliant, so that Vicars, who stood about 6 feet 4 inches, would topple over his small opponent, and thus there would be laughter and finish. But Warner is now the Rev. W. Warner. Time was (in 1882) when he even preached a Latin sermon to the Balliol Vice-Chancellor (Dr Jowett); he supervises women students, looks after municipal charities and lodging-houses, and does a thousand and one other good things. So of his follies—if he had any—let me not write in these later days.

It happened about the period under notice that one evening not long before the end of term we discovered that there was a basement or cellarage flat under the ground-floor rooms and we got down there through an entrance door that had evidently not been opened for years. Exploring this underground region we discovered, among other things, quite a number of old stained-glass windows stored away, and a huge Bacchanalian picture, of a really startling character. With great difficulty we succeeded in conveying this picture up the stairs and through the door to the ground floor. It was then taken into Stuart Wortley's room, the greater part of one side of which it covered. It was kept there till the following afternoon (Sunday), and when dinner-time arrived and the Master, with several important guests, had emerged from his house and gone into the hall to dine, this appalling picture was brought out and hung on a lamp-post in the quad immediately facing and within ten yards of his house. The scouts were in hall waiting at table, and there was nobody about when this deed was perpetrated. We

could not, of course, stand by and watch developments, so went into hall and dined with becoming gravity. Moreover, we returned to our rooms afterwards and spent an unusually quiet evening, without hearing anything whatever about the picture.

Early next morning, in accordance with an arrangement I had made some time before, I journeyed off to Brokenhurst, in the New Forest, to see the famous fox-terriers which a good old sportsman named Gibson kept there, among them being Cottingham Nettle, the dam of my own dog, Jester. After spending a very satisfactory and instructive day, I got back late to Oxford and it was about 10.30 P.M. when the college gate was opened to me.

That I was to go to the Master immediately on my return—such was the message delivered to me by the porter, and it seemed ominous. Obviously the first thing to do was to see my friends and ascertain what had happened. I soon found that the hangers of the picture on the lamp-post had been discovered. The dons had sat in common-room on the subject and all the available culprits were to be "sent down" for the rest of the term. I alone had not been available, and the common-room had sat for an hour or more while the Messenger vainly sought for me. Eventually the common-room ceased sitting, and thus it fell out that it was left for the Master to deal with me. The prospect seemed black indeed.

However, there was no escape, so I repaired to his house and was shown up to his room. There was but a dim light, and he was working with a reading-lamp in the far corner, absorbed in his great work which as Jowett's Plato became a classic from the moment it left the press.

He looked up as I entered, but seemed hardly to recognise me, for his mind was concentrated on his work. At last he said:

"Ah! Mr Allison." Then, after a pause: "Your tutor tells me you haven't been attending lectures regularly."

In an instant it flashed across me that he was not

thinking of me at all and that if I could get away without diverting his thoughts from Plato all might yet be well; so I said, very, very quietly, that I would be more regular in future, and backed as noiselessly as possible towards the door. I had nearly got there when he said:

"Ah! there was something else I had to speak to you about."

"Now for it!" thought I, but I felt instinctively that there was still a chance if I made no noise, and held my breath; and so it proved, for the slight spark of recollection about me died out; he was again immersed in Plato, and glancing up for a fraction of a second, he said:

"I'll not detain you any longer."

Even so, no burglar ever opened a door or passed from a room more silently than I did from his that night, for I was so absolutely conscious that any sort of noise would break his train of thought and rouse him to remembrance of me.

I made my ghostly exit with perfect success, and for me the incident of the picture-hanging was thus closed, while my friends who were sent down could only envy my extraordinary luck. I have told the story exactly as it happened; and it serves to show that a high-strung, nervous organisation may sometimes serve you in good stead. It was this that enabled me to appreciate instinctively and at once how to save the position by keeping as quiet as death.

In the matter of fox-terriers I had done well that year, 1871. Diver, a dog I bought from Fred Sale, of Derby, won first and Cup at Darlington, in good company, on the 27th July, and Mr Arrowsmith, who also became affected by the fox-terrier craze, got a prize with his Tiny, by Jester. I appear in *The Field* of that date as "The Rev. W. Allison," this, doubtless, because of the Coxwold Vicarage address. Diver was a flat-catching sort of dog, for he had a very long head and beautiful ears. Moreover, he was dead game, but he was a bull-terrier to all intents and purposes, and I never fancied him. Just

before sending him to Manchester Show in December that year, I had him and Jester out exercising in the fields at the back of the Vicarage. They caught a rabbit and then started fighting, I was alone, but as Diver was going to the show next day I was bound to separate them, if possible, for Jester was a very hard-bitten customer.

It is very difficult indeed to separate two determined dogs when you are single-handed, but I managed to seize up Jester by the scruff of the neck, when for a moment they loosed holds. Before I raised him high enough, however, Diver sprang up and caught him by a hind leg, whereupon Jester whipped his head round and got me by the thumb. On that I was forced to drop him, and they fought till they were fairly blown and exhausted. Then I again got one of them, and carried him to the kennels. I was never bitten by a dog except that time, and of course it was an accident.

Diver was pretty well marked about his head, but we fomented him assiduously that night, and sent him off to Manchester next morning in a dog-box, without an attendant.

This was the only time I ever sent a dog to a show unaccompanied, and the result was indeed surprising, for he won first prize in a very strong class, the Hon. T. Fitz-William's Tyke (a much better dog) being second, Chance II. third, Underwood's Spot fourth, H. H. Gray's Tartar, extra, fifth, and L. Turner's Trumps, extra, sixth. I sold Diver for £40 after that show and was glad to be rid of him.

At the York August Meeting that year the pari-mutuel machines made their first and only appearance on Knavesmire. They were about eight or nine in number, and were stationed outside the enclosures, near what is now the entrance to the paddock. They took half-crown stakes, and the machinery was well arranged to show the number of stakes on each horse as half-crown after half-crown was invested. This was done on the face of a big dial, the figures changing mechanically to show each investment.

I was interested in the novelty and went out and put 2s. 6d. on Rose of Athol for the Great Yorkshire Stakes in each of the machines. They did not, as under present conditions, pay on an average of their takings, but made their returns independently, though I believe all the machines were in the same ownership. This idea was not a bad one, for it gave variety to the attraction, some showing better odds than others against your fancy, whatever it might be, and for that reason I tried them all with my Rose of Athol half-crowns. The daughter of Blair Athol and Violet won easily from Ringwood Field-Marshal and others, and the average return for my half-crowns was 15 to 1, while in the ring she had started at 8 to 1.

These pari-mutuel machines were taken to one or two other race meetings, but inasmuch as they were located in public places, outside enclosures, the proprietors were prosecuted as rogues and vagabonds, using instruments of gambling, and convicted. That a pari-mutuel register is not an " instrument of gambling " any more than is a betting-book ought to have been sufficiently obvious, and it is practically certain that a pari-mutuel inside a club or club enclosure is as legitimate as a club sweepstakes on the Derby.

There was a first-rate field for the York Cup on the day when Rose of Athol won her race. Shannon won that Cup from Agility and Gertrude, Dutch Skater, for whom the distance was not far enough, being unplaced. It is intended, after the war, to revive the York Cup, and that, too, over the old two-mile course.

The star of Blair Athol was well in the ascendant in 1871, for though Rose of Athol got no nearer than fifth for the St Leger, the magnificent Prince Charlie came out for the Middle Park Plate, and won it after making all the running. Laburnum ran a close finish with him, but Prince Charlie had been stopped in his work, a week or so before the race, and never again would Laburnum have got near him. Baron Rothschild, however, who was

having a great year with Favonius, Hannah and Corisande, was so elated by Laburnum's running that he shortly afterwards made the speech in which he said: "The Baron will race next year. Follow the Baron!"

As a matter of fact, the luck changed, and he had a very bad season "next year." His remark has come to be associated with his fortunes of 1871, but incorrectly so.

Prince Charlie ran again, at the Houghton meeting, when he met Cremorne, who until then was regarded as the champion two-year-old, and beat him three lengths, into third place, for the Criterion; Nuneham being second. *The Field* stated that Cremorne's Derby pretensions were thus effectually disposed of, but that was a case of prophesying too soon. Prince Charlie stood 16·3 hh. at that time, with immense power and bone. Never was there such a horse in my experience, and some of us hoped against hope that the report of his being wrong in his wind was untrue. To me it was pure bliss that there should be such a son of Blair Athol.

I wrote in a page or two before this that we were boxing and fencing, and it should perhaps be explained that as Tom Evans was getting too old I and some others had gone on to Blake's, where Blake himself, a very fine sample of humanity, was a first-rate instructor, not only for boxing, but foils, single-stick or bayonet. There I soon got a lesson in what it means not to stick to work. Boxing at Tom Evans's there had been a man named Brancker, so lacking in skill and aptitude that it was a simple matter to hit him as often as you liked and to prevent his ever hitting you, but he was a genuine trier and did not mind how many times he was hit. Also he never missed a day trying to improve himself.

Somehow I dropped about six months before I went to Blake, and did no boxing in that interval. When I got there I found Brancker, who had been plodding on all the while and had come to Blake some months earlier.

I thought it would be an easy preliminary to have a round or two with him, but found, to my intense surprise,

that he was now far too good. The man had no sort of real talent for boxing, but had worked himself into something more than useful, and it was at least a month before I got on terms with him again, and another month before I could assert superiority, which was natural, but dependent, as all so-called superiority must be, on work sufficient to maintain it.

I really loved boxing and fencing, both being almost perfection for sport and exercise, and I grew thick and strong on the work till I weighed 12 stone 7 lb. Blake even talked of an amateur championship, and then came a day when I boxed with G. D. Faber, now Lord Wittenham.

No one would dream of either of us as pugilists now, but I am writing of what I know, that George Faber in those days, with the gloves on, presented a very difficult problem. He was tall, lithe and active, with a long reach and a fair knowledge of the game, and I rejoiced in meeting such an opponent, until—and, of course, by accident—he hit me with the inside of a glove on the side of the head, and though little was thought of it at the time, such trouble resulted that I had to see a specialist, who declared my skull to be far too thin to stand serious boxing. I almost wished I had been born thick-headed, for I was full of boxing ambition at that time, but George Faber, quite undesignedly, found out the weak spot, and I have reason to thank him; for in a serious contest it would have been found out much more effectually, without a doubt.

We had a fair measure of what the amateur championship form really amounted to that year, for Chappell was one of us at Blake's, and he went up and actually did win the heavy or middle weight—I forget which. Since then he changed his name to Maddison.

One way and another life passed very happily in those days, and in the Christmas vacation there was always plenty of sport hunting with the York and Ainsty, the Bedale, Lord Middleton's, the Sinnington and an occasional

day with the Hurworth. I shall have something more to say about this later on, but at present I will get forward to the next term, which was big with fate for the Cardinal, as Angram was now called. Smith had greatly improved the horse in the vacation, and he was now quite clever, even over timber and cramped places. We decided that he was good enough to run for the Merton and Christ Church grinds.

CHAPTER XVII

The Cardinal and the "Grinds"—How we trained him—His good Race for the Merton "Grind"—Attempt made to buy him—C. S. Newton corroborates—The Christ Church "Grind"—Victory all but assured—Fall and Death of the Cardinal—Moments of Depression—I come of Age—Celebration of the Event—Mods. Examination and the Latin Verse Paper—Prince Charlie intervenes—More Depression—Dinners at the Inner Temple—The old Bedford Hotel—Evans's

NONE of my old letters refers to the momentous period when we set about training the Cardinal, but I wrote some of my recollections last year in *The Sportsman*, when referring to the death of the late Mr W. H. P. Jenkins, and may as well quote from the article:

MR "P. MERTON": OXFORD MEMORIES

I had intended to write something about the late Mr W. H. P. Jenkins, though he was a few years before my time; but Mr Henry Rouse, in Tuesday's issue, has done it from fuller knowledge than I could boast of. His letter is one of the greatest possible interest, and should be kept for future reference by all who are really interested in the history of 'Chasing. In early days anyone a few years older than yourself seems to belong to another generation, but Mr Jenkins, though not quite a contemporary of mine, did certainly play a considerable part in the Merton "Grind" of 1871 or 1872, and also, I think, in the Christ Church one the same year. I am often charged with having a good memory, but here I am at fault, and I think Mr C. S. Newton, or Mr Lindsay Smith, or Lord Harris could supply deficiencies. The "Grinds" used in the days I mention to be run on the old course beyond the Bablock Hythe Ferry, and we—I say "we" because Lindsay Smith's horse was one I had brought him from Yorkshire, named Angram, but renamed the Cardinal, and we were together in training him from the Randolph Hotel stables, galloping sometimes at Bullingdon and sometimes on Port Meadow,

with my old decrepit plater, Drum Major—I say therefore "we," had this horse, the Cardinal, in both the Merton and Christ Church "Grinds" of that year, and W. H. P. Jenkins was somehow mixed up with it, so was Lord Harris—who, I think, rode a winner—and so was C. S. Newton. By the same token, however, our horse knocked up against some pretty hot stuff in Merlin and Scarrington, the latter of whom ran third for the Grand National the following year. Lindsay Smith, who is now an austere and very eminent banker, rode the Cardinal, and he was opposing something very much better than the usual undergraduate jockey. He finished a good third in the Merton "Grind" in a field of about fifteen, and I think C. S. Newton tried to buy the horse afterwards—he will correct me if I am wrong. Merlin was the winner, and I think Scarrington was second. In the Christ Church "Grind" a fortnight later—our horse having meanwhile done very well—Merlin was penalised 7 lb., and, to cut a long story short, the Cardinal was winning by half-a-furlong when the bank of a ditch on the taking-off side gave way with him at the last fence but one, and he broke his back, leaving Merlin to go on and win.

The vicissitudes of banking in war time may have troubled Lindsay Smith in these last few years, but I question whether he was ever more troubled than he was that day by the death of the Cardinal, who must have been a smashing good horse, for his opponents, which I have mentioned, had been fairly and squarely trained by experienced men, whereas we were the merest novices working from the Randolph stables, where you paid 24s. 6d. a week to keep your horse. The late C. G. Symonds—"Master Charles"—however, who had the stables, was a sportsman, and so was his head man "John"; they helped us in every way they could, and there was no food controller in those days. Still, it is manifest that our horse must have been something "extra special" to do what he did under such conditions. Whether it was Merlin or Scarrington that Jenkins had to do with I cannot for the life of me remember, but I know it was he who somehow contributed to the defeat of the Cardinal, whose victory, as he was the property of a Balliol undergraduate, would have been a record indeed. He was only six years old, and was by Pontifex, brother to Surplice, with many other crosses of blood.

It was twenty-five years later when I met "Master Charles" in Oxford, the morning after I—greatly daring—had been the principal speaker at the Union in a debate on the need for the old Sporting League, and he recalled the Cardinal episode in every detail, together with many other experiences of my day which it is needless to mention. He no longer had the Randolph stables; "John," his head man, was dead, but he himself was as genial and bright as ever. He died a few years later, and I am

gratified to think that he left me a very excellent engraving of the famous mare, Parasol, for it seems to prove that—however unworthily — I had struck a sympathetic chord with a good sportsman even in early and often foolish days.

Some little time after the above extract was published in *The Sportsman*, Mr C. S. Newton was good enough to write me a letter on the subject, and this I also published in *The Sportsman*, with further details of my own :

MORE MEMORIES

(*By the Special Commissioner*)

Friday.

THE OTHER DAY

I wrote the other day about the death of the late Mr W. H. P. Jenkins, and mentioned a horse which I had in those times, and I have received the following letter, which, I need hardly say, I have read with the greatest possible interest, and I am sure it will be of equal interest to many of my readers. The horse in question was originally named Angram, from the name of the farm near Coxwold, in North Yorkshire, where he was bred and reared, but when I bought him for Mr Lindsay Smith, the now well-known banker, he renamed him the Cardinal. I said in my recent article on the subject that Mr C. S. Newton would be able to correct me if my memory went astray when I stated that it was he who wanted to buy the horse from Lindsay Smith after his first race, and it will be seen from his letter that I made no mistake, though the incidents referred to are some forty-five years old :

MYRTLE GROVE, PATCHING,
WORTHING,
Dec. 2, 1917.

DEAR SIR,—" Angram," the story of a wasted horse, as far as my memory carries me. It seems as if it were only yesterday that I went to Lindsay Smith's rooms in Balliol to try to buy Cardinal, and I remember meeting you there, when I was very anxious to buy. I'm not quite certain, to use Harry Custance's expression, that you didn't " queer the pitch." I rode in Cardinal's last race. Close home three or four of us were within hail, but I thought we should never catch the leader, when down he went at a very boggy ditch, with fence on the landing side. I don't at the moment remember what I rode or who won, but there is always a picture of Cardinal in my mind. Had I been lucky

enough to purchase the horse he would not have run, as I had a good mount, and he would have run in the National Hunt 'Chase, "owner up."

Angram, by your pen, is at Oakham among *Silks and Scarlets* and other refreshing books of sport. The names of horses and riders I wrote on the front page shortly after the book was published. The bookstall at York was responsible for my purchase.

Jenks was an example for good to the undergraduate—rowed in his college Eight, the best in England at his weight with the gloves, preferred riding a raw four-year-old, if it happened to be a farmer's, to anything else, and ready to do a good turn to anyone. Out with the Bicester one day, we had run over four or five fences, and were standing in the road while hounds were being cast. Jenks arrived covered with samples of the various fields. "How did he carry you?" asked the proud owner. "Oh, well, damned well. He's a good horse; he only put me down four times!" Lord Harris, "Mr G. Sirrah" rode the winner of one of those "grinds," and was, I think, second on a very good mare in Cardinal's race.

Young Charlie Symonds, as we used to call him, put me up on the Bittern, a bay gelding by Pontiff, in the Merton Open Chase, one of those years—a lovely ride. The horse won, Jenks on Vigilant being second. I have a whip commemorating the event; it was an event, too! Fancy beating Jenks! I was almost terrified. Charlie Symonds shortly after won the Aylesbury Open Farmers' Race on the horse, and sold him to Angus, Duke of Hamilton. We got *The Sportsman* to-day. It doesn't always come owing to P.O. delays. I'm glad it did come, as your Notes have recalled pleasant days when one's greatest anxiety was—no, not the schools—whether anyone would give one a ride in any race on anything, or if one's hunter could do his three days a fortnight, and possibly one day between the shafts. Strikes at Coventry have for five minutes, and possibly longer, been obliterated. The sun has shone once more, but for too short a time.

Yours truly,

C. S. NEWTON.

P.S.—I wrote the above really *to you*, but, should you publish it, do what Mr Sponge did for Jack Spraggon when he put pen to paper describing Mr Puffington's great run.—C. S. N.

I am sure there is no need for me to edit Mr Newton's letter, for I could not improve it any more than Mr Sponge did Jack Spraggon's account of the run. Fortunately this letter will go before an editor with more understanding as to its contents than

did the Jack Spraggon report, and it will doubtless be printed just as it is written. The Cardinal (late Angram) was by Pontifex (brother of Surplice) out of a mare with many crosses of blood. He was bred by the late John Coates, of Angram Hall, near Coxwold, and as a five-year-old was ridden to hounds several times by my sister. He was only six when his fatal accident in the Christ Church "grind" occurred, and from the form he had shown and was then showing it is practically certain that he had the makings of a very great horse indeed. Mr Newton does not remember who won that last race, but I do very well. It was Merlin, and a good one he was. From where I was, on a hack, in the winning field, you could not see the last fence but one, or about fifty yards on either side of it. I watched our horse go out of sight, striding away with a long lead, and then waited for him to reappear, but he never did, and at last there came Merlin, who had been going second, and then, of course, I knew, and rode off post haste to the fatal spot, where was Lindsay Smith standing by his horse and the usual gaping crowd around him. A vet turned up and soon diagnosed a broken back, so that ended it.

Of Merlin it may be remembered that he ran third to Reugny and Chimney Sweep, for the Grand National of 1874, Defence being fourth, with Disturbance, Congress and Casse Tete unplaced.

I even wrote a book called *Angram, or Hidden Talent*, as Mr Newton states, and it ends thus:

Almost all the facts of this narrative are literally true, and will be well remembered by many of the actors in the scenes described. The name of the Cardinal will long be spoken of with admiration and regret, even as the poet who launched out into verse on his untimely end, concluded:

> And let me give him still his due,
> Now he has broken life's short tether;
> A better horse I seldom knew,
> A kinder ne'er was lapped in leather.

It was certainly a very grievous downfall to our bright hopes, and in the despondency of the next week or two we felt more than half inclined to read seriously for Mods., but that feeling passed very soon.

Follies of the old irresponsible sort once more became

prevalent, and here is a letter, written not long after the death of the Cardinal, but undated:

We are gated at present for disorderly conduct at a supper in FitzRoy's room one night last week Fortunately they were not able to bring home to us all that was done, otherwise we should have been sent down. We got into the principal lecture-room at about one o'clock, took the desk away, locked it up in a coal cellar and threw away the key. We then locked one of the lecture-room doors, leaving the key in the inside, and barricaded the other with tables, etc., so that it could not possibly be opened. We then escaped out of the window which shut in the inside with a catch; and when the old man came to lecture next morning, it was absolutely impossible to get in. He had to go away, vowing vengeance, and the result was the window had to be broken in. However, notwithstanding our gatement we went to dine with the officers of the Scots Greys, who were going through here, and got in quite safely about 11 o'clock, over Trinity wall. So are the Dons scored off all round.

To the best of my recollection the occasion of the above foolishness was my coming of age. Hozier's uncle was then Colonel of the Scots Greys, and that was how we came to dine with them. The getting in over Trinity wall was by that time a very simple matter, for some time before we had annexed a ladder which some painters had left against one of the lamp-posts in the quad, and this was carried down and secreted in the cellar where the Bacchanalian picture had been found. In the far corner of the quad there is a wall between Balliol and Trinity, hidden from sight by shrubs and trees. It had glass bottles on the top of it, but that did not matter when we had the assistance of that ladder. The practice was to arrange with someone remaining in college to put the ladder over Trinity wall to be ready for such of us as were coming in late.

It was a sort of back entrance to Trinity that we used to go down to get to the ladder, and it was easy, of course, to climb by it on to the wall, then pull it up and put it down on the Balliol side. This method of going in and out was never discovered, but since the new hall has been

built on that side of the quad the old facilities have probably been interfered with.

Meanwhile there had been the delight of knowing that Prince Charlie had beaten Cremorne for the 2000 Guineas —a wonderful performance for a roarer, which, by that time, he was well known to be. People became quite infatuated about him, and, setting all precedent at defiance, believed that he would even succeed in staying the Derby course. Needless to say, I was one of the infatuated, and it is disclosed in the Prologue how I left the Latin Verse paper in the Mods. Examination to go out and see if Prince Charlie had won the Derby. The disappointment of finding that he was unplaced, coupled with the knowledge that I had quitted my best paper and could not return to do it, was depressing in the extreme, and it resulted in my getting a Second instead of a First, which was a really silly thing to have done. The Derby was the only race for which Prince Charlie was unplaced during four seasons on the turf. He was never beaten but once over a mile or less: he won twenty-five races and lost only four, so that his career soon blazed into glory again, but at the time of his Derby I felt very sad.

I had one curious stroke of luck in that Mods. examination, for there was one of the Greek plays, the *Philoctetes*, which I had never looked at until just before going in to do the paper. I took a sudden fancy to open the book and read the first ten or twelve lines of that play that might catch my eye. I did so and read a part of a Chorus carefully, with Paley's notes. It seems almost incredible, but that identical portion of the *Philoctetes*, and that only, was given in the examination paper, and, of course, I dealt with it in fine style.

By this time I was entered at the Inner Temple and going up to town from time to time to eat dinners there. I always used to stay at the old Bedford Hotel in Covent Garden, and a rare good house it was, under the management of Mrs Anne Warner. Those were the days of Evans's supper-rooms, Paddy Green and perfect glee-singing.

Never were there such beautiful potatoes as waiters used to squeeze out in a snowy shower on to your plate, and the chops or kidneys were always perfect. It is not easy to understand why Evans's ever came to an end, for no other establishment has taken its place. However, the National Sporting Club has made very excellent use of the same building. The Bedford Hotel has been long since pulled down.

That also was the period when the Vokes family did such wonders at the Drury Lane pantomimes, and when Adelaide Neilson, in such characters as Amy Robsart and Rebecca of York, was drawing the town. Amid it all, I had a fatal aptitude for believing that I could do wonders whenever I wished and that there was no need whatever to worry about work in the interim. No one could ever make a greater mistake; but those were very happy days. Even the dinners at the Inner Temple were not unpleasant.

CHAPTER XVIII

Vicars and the Syrup of Ginger—The Sacred Barge Pole—A Bread Riot—The Master objects—I select the Jurisprudence Schools—Dr Ryott supports my Choice—Dendy's Lectures—Hunting from Chipping Norton—Stuart Wortley and the Large Horse—C. C. Rhys and my Grey Mare—Silver-tongued Tom Duffield—Entertainments in College—Slapp's Band—Life out of College—Dudley Milner—Vixen, a Dog Story

THERE is no need to write much more about this Oxford life, delightful as it was while it lasted. I never gave up boating altogether, and throughout each summer we were constantly going to Sandford and elsewhere. Thus, in an 1871 letter:

> We have been rowing and canoeing all last week from 2 to 7.30 P.M., long before which time Vicars had, of course, succumbed to fatigue, and had to be put in a corner of the river and left till we returned.

Vicars, it must be explained, though of gigantic height, was very fragile and delicate, and it was through him that I discovered how to brew punch that would do no one any harm. Vicars, by advice of his doctor, used to take syrup of ginger after every meal as an aid to digestion; and it happened in those days we used occasionally to brew punch after 11 P.M. Now this beverage had a disastrous effect on Vicars on each successive morning, and it once occurred to me that syrup of ginger might make it all right for him. The experiment was tried with the most successful result, and to make sure there was no mistake we changed about for several nights. Every morning after punch with syrup of ginger in it he was well, but without the syrup of ginger he felt like death. It was a curious discovery, but I have found it work with

equal success in every other case, and I have utilised it on New Year's Eve ever since.

Dear old Vicars! It is wonderful what rage would seize on him if anyone in his rooms attempted to take hold of what we called the barge pole—in other words, the pole for closing up his windows—or if any other took up one of the round tin covers which used to be brought up after dinner with hot anchovy toast under them, and set the tin rolling down his spiral staircase. These and similar trifles used to lead to awful slaughter of ourselves, and it was always honourably understood that no one should dream of retaliating on Vicars. There is an account in the book *Angram*,[1] which sufficiently illustrates this:

Vicars had, as usual, been distinguishing himself. He had made an attack on some visitors to his room by whom he imagined himself affronted, and not content with the usual missiles discharged at them as they ran downstairs, he seized bread from off his table where they had been lunching, and pelted them with it as they emerged into the quadrangle below.

There were many large pieces of this bread, so he was able to discharge a goodly shower. The party below, finding that soda-water bottles were not forthcoming, took heart of grace, picked up the scattered bread and hurled it up again at Vicars in the window.

He vigorously continued his fire till, ammunition failing him, he actually cast down upon his foe the remnants of a leg of lamb, being struck in the face at the same moment by adroitly aimed bread, now mopped in mud from below.

Now there was a little window of the Master's House close by Vicars', at right angles with it; the two windows being in a corner of the Quadrangle.

Vicars then, in awful wrath, and with mud-bespattered face, was wildly looking round for some more dreadful bolt to project against the mocking throng below, when his raging eye fell upon the Master's window, and, struck as by paralysis, he saw the placid face of the Master, a quiet spectator of the whole proceeding.

Vicars drew back into his room like one in a trance and ruminated; the battle raged no more.

In due course the Messenger arrived. . . . Vicars had to go

[1] Sampson Bros., York.

to the Master and naturally presented a somewhat sheepish appearance.

"Mr Vicars, you really ought to have known better than to act in such an unbecoming manner as I saw just now."

Vicars mumbled some kind of apologetic excuse.

"Of course, I don't regard it as any very serious offence, but it must not occur again. *Life would be unsupportable if everyone took to throwing bread about in this manner.* Take care you don't give me reason to complain again. I will not detain you any longer."

And that ended it; but let no one think that in these combats with Vicars there was ever a spark of ill-feeling. It was all mere sport, and he, after the first rush of rage, enjoyed it as much as anyone else. It even happened in later life, when we were or should have been sedate, that Warner and I were staying with Vicars and his mother in the country. It was just after luncheon, and Vicars had gone out to attend to some message when I saw a barge pole of the old sort near the windows. We wondered if he would attack us if we took hold of it, and decided to try as soon as he came in. The result was equal to our most sanguine expectations, for he at once went for us and we fled, as in the old days, into the hall and up the staircase, meeting old Mrs Vicars coming down. He was close behind us, with vengeful countenance, and the good lady was fairly amazed. "Edward! Edward!!" she said, "what is the meaning of this?"

It remained only for me to say: "Oh! it's all right, Mrs Vicars, we often make fools of ourselves in this way" —and so the incident terminated. This, mind you, was when I was married, and Warner was a Fellow of Christ Church.

The rest of the Oxford time may as well be dealt with more briefly, for it was the old story that when once the pressure of the final schools in *Literæ Humaniores* came on, and the Balliol authorities took to giving one books to read in the vacation as a condition of further residence, I played my old *Deus ex machinâ*, Dr Ryott, on them by getting him to certify that I had been suffering from

congestion of the brain and was not fit for any such trying work. The History or Jurisprudence Schools were, in his opinion, the limit of what I could go in for without most serious risk. The good Doctor had not the faintest idea about any distinction between the various schools, and there was absolutely nothing the matter with me, but he certified unhesitatingly in the sense above indicated, and so it happened that I cleared myself of the tuition of the Balliol dons, and took up Jurisprudence under the auspices of Mr Dendy of University College, who used to lecture on a hunting morning with trousers over his breeches and boots, so as to lose no time in getting away afterwards.

I dearly liked him, though I have never met him since I left Oxford, and as a lecturer he was perfection, for he stammered a good deal and you could take down all he said without any trouble.

It was the hunting that made me hold to him and determine to do him credit.

There had been various horses of mine at the Randolph stables in these later days, one an extraordinarily good little grey mare by Yorkshire Grey, who had most horrible tricks for putting you off if you were riding alone. She had been turned out on a Yorkshire moor and had learned how to get rid of boys who used to scramble on to her. Thus she would stop short, whip round and buck two or three times sideways, when least expected, but if she had company there was no trouble. Lindsay Smith once rode her with the Christ Church drag and cleaned them all out very easily. She was too light for me, however, and I changed her for one of the very best, named Skittles, which Bob Colling (the elder) sent me. She was supposed to be a Cleveland bay mare but she must surely have had a cross of blood in her. At any rate, no day was too long for her, and as a timber jumper she was quite one of the best. She would never spread herself over fences, but was extraordinarily clever in kicking off from banks on the other side, and for stamina and endurance there

never was a better. I exchanged her with my sister, later on, for a horse called Longbow, by Launcelot (brother to Touchstone) and I suppose this was the best hunter I ever owned, though he was a shocking bad hack.

Time had slipped along, and here is a letter, written 26th March 1874:

I am going to send the horse home the day after to-morrow, as hunting here is about over, and he has had a pretty hard season.

We went off a long way by train to Chipping Norton yesterday, and also induced Wortley to go, for whom we procured a very large horse.

It was the most fearful place when we got there. We had to wait from 9 o'clock till 12, and there was only one village near the station, and that provided with the worst-looking inn you ever saw—only accommodation for one horse, and nothing but two old women.

We found a vacant stable of very fearful description across the way; and we also found some oats. Of course, we had no assistance of any kind; and then the only thing we could procure for breakfast was the very fattest of bacon with the skin on; bread but no butter.

The people at the station had had no idea about horse-boxes, and so we had to get the horses out all by ourselves and manage the opening of the box and everything.

Then thinking we would by no means return again to the horrid inn, we set off once more to the station and conveyed all the clothing and things in front of us. Having located it in the horse-box we proceeded to hunt and, of course, had a very moderate day, over several large stone walls which men seemed to think nothing of.

They jumped one very high one right down a great drop into the road—such a drop that they went out of sight—it is needless to say that we refrained from doing so.

Smith cut his horse's knees on a wall, and then we returned to the station and had to clothe our horses once more, and get them into the box, which was managed quite successfully.

I suppose it is well to be able to do these things, but it is not pleasing.

No doubt the above experience of doing things for yourself was salutary, whether pleasing or not. I think it was the only time Stuart Wortley ever went hunting with Lindsay Smith and myself.

As to the grey mare above referred to, I have before me a copy of *Minora Carmina*, by C. C. R., published in 1887, and poor Rhys sent it to me with the following inscription :—

> In memory of Balliol days,
> Dear Allison, I send these lays ;
> And would the pace they speed away
> Were good as of thy gallant grey !
> C. C. Rhys.

"The Pote" did his hunting in great style while at Oxford. I remember seeing him out with two horses with the South Oxfordshire, and rating his second horseman soundly for not being there at the opportune moment. I cannot claim to have ever touched a point of eminence such as that in those happy days, but suffice it that I saw sport indeed with all the surrounding packs, and notably with Tom Duffield and the old Berkshire. I remember that by no means silver-tongued M.F.H. getting through three horses in one run, and the third galloped into a brook with him. He lay on the bank with his legs in the air to run the water out of his boots, and though he may have wished to utter more strenuously the thoughts that arose in him, his utterances, such as they were, could scarcely have been more forcible. Many good days we had with Mr Hall and the Heythrop. Lord Valentia was just coming to the fore at that time, and whether we rode well or ill, this much I can say, that we had glorious and unforgettable times.

Before the end of 1872 I had got in a way of entertaining married friends to dinner in my rooms. There was a good piano and Edwards, the scout, was capable enough, but it must have been somewhat weird entertainment.

In a letter written in November of that year I speak of having first dined with one of these couples at the Randolph :

> I played billiards with him last night for a long time—so long that we found it was past one o'clock, and I ought to have been

in at 12. Consequently I am "gated" for a week. [This was before the discovery of the ladder and Trinity wall.] He has been sitting with me a long time this morning drinking beer. We ride every afternoon: I found a very nice lady's horse of Master Charles's, and of course they think it is mine.

I managed my dinner far better than I could have hoped—it was really well done—and the scouts made very few mistakes. I had a string band playing the most choice selection of music outside in the street all the time. I am going to repeat the performance to-night.

You perhaps do not know that I have a piano this term. They leave here on Thursday.

I expect I shall not be able to invest the timber money.

The string band referred to was Slapp's Band, which all my contemporaries must remember. Once when returning in the small hours from a dance where they had been engaged, they favoured me with an impromptu serenade in front of my windows. It was the *John Peel Galop*, and I don't think I have ever been so pleased to be "waked from my bed" as I was on that occasion.

Now as to the second dinner referred to in the above letter, I find one dated 28th November 1872:

I have just returned from seeing Mr and Mrs —— off at the station. We have had a very good time of it since they came. I managed my second dinner even with more success than the first. The band outside carried it off with great *éclat*. Last night I dined with them at 4.30, for I am "gated" and obliged to be in before 6 P.M., and they spent the evening with me afterwards.

It may be gathered from the above, which is but a sample of what was going on, that life at Oxford was not being taken very seriously by me. Moreover, the allusion to not investing the timber money is suggestive. I had realised a fair sum by cutting down timber, and I suppose I must have spent the money, but after all, what does it matter now?

There came the time, at the end of our third year, when we lived out of college, at 77 George Street, and very comfortable it was, with a well-instructed boy to valet

us all, and dinners which I shall always remember: for rolled ribs of beef constituted a frequent dish, and the name, "Shapeless Beef" was given to it. In those days Dudley Milner, younger brother of Sir Frederick Milner, used often to come and see us. There was no better judge of racing form, and he was very friendly with Captain Machell. It was he who invented the phrase of betting "till the cows come home." He was very short-sighted and never provided himself with adequate glasses, so that when he referred to books of form he had to get his eyes and the book into close proximity. There must be many still alive who remember him well, for he was a genuine enthusiast in regard to bloodstock.

I believe that he once rendered the late Lord Gerard such good services that he was offered his choice of any horse in the stable, and he chose Macaroon, by Macaroni, out of Margery Daw. This came very near to being a successful choice, as Macaroon ran second for the Cesarewitch.

In connection with 77 George Street, I shall always remember a fox-terrier bitch of mine, named Vixen, who was sent up in a hamper from Yorkshire. She arrived about midday, and was only let out for a few minutes in the courtyard; after which she came up while we had lunch. I was going riding, and some of the others were going to walk with their dogs into the country. They took Vixen with the rest, and when I got back I found them much upset because when they had got about six miles out of Oxford she had taken a fit, and on recovering had run away from them—as dogs will, in such circumstances, unless you give them time to collect their senses. They had run after her, and finally lost her altogether. I was very sorry, for I was fond of Vixen, but could not, of course, blame anybody, unless it was myself for letting her go out with strangers. That she was gone for ever I made no doubt. Next morning, however, when the boy came with my tea, Vixen ran into my room and jumped on to the bed.

She had not only found her way back to 77 George Street, which was in itself an amazing feat, but she had come to my room, where she had never been before—and there were about a dozen others—and was found sitting outside it. Dog stories are apt to be disbelieved, but this, at any rate, is a true one ; and the more it is thought of the more marvellous it seems.

CHAPTER XIX

Joseph Rawlinson Battersby—His Rules—How the York and Ainsty Men received them—Langar and Ernest Willoughby—Diffidence of the Bedale Men—John Booth and his Horses—The Great Run from Baldersby Whin to Newton House—A Red-letter Day indeed—Longbow on the Swale Embankment—All's Well—More about Battersby

IT was in the Christmas vacation of 1873 that I hit upon the idea of "Joseph Rawlinson Battersby," and prepared the following circular, which was sent out to all the York and Ainsty and Bedale men :—

Mr Joseph Rawlinson Battersby begs to announce that he is making his annual tour through the hunting counties for the purpose of collecting a stud of horses to be located for the remainder of the present season at York.

In offering a copy of the rules to be observed by his patrons, Mr B. wishes to assure all that no insult is intended; he feels confident that they will see he is actuated by a sincere desire to promote their welfare.

They will doubtless be aware that the value of any horse is doubled after it has been ridden by J. R. B. Mr B. makes it his object to observe, in a day's hunting, such persons as are possessed of good but mismanaged horses. He feels it the triumph of his skill to reclaim and sell at large prices animals that, from want of efficient horsemanship, have become well-nigh ruined.

That Mr B. can do this, if any man can, is certain ; and those who doubt it are referred to Mr Arthur Yates, the cleverness of whose horses is so frequently spoken of in the sporting papers (all his steeplechasers are made by Mr B.).

Mr Ernest Willoughby, it is not generally known, entrusted Langar for five weeks to Mr B. Further references can be given if required.

In anticipation of considerable patronage Mr B. has engaged a number of commodious boxes at York, and will have the horses under personal supervision. For the next week his address will be at Yarm, afterwards Scawin's Hotel, York.

RULES

To be observed by gentlemen entrusting their horses to Mr Battersby

1. That all horses must stand at the expense of their owners.
2. All horses must be in York before 1st February.
3. Each horse to be accompanied by a groom.
4. Each owner must name the lowest price at which he will sell his horse. If Mr B. can obtain a larger sum he will retain the surplus.
5. Five per cent. on the price mentioned will be deducted as commission, in case of a sale, and will be charged if the horse is not sold.
6. All expenses are to be paid before the horses are returned.
7. Mr Battersby will be responsible for no damage.
8. Mr Battersby's hotel and other expenses will be fairly divided among his subscribers.
9. Mr B. can permit no interference ; the horses must be entirely given up to him ; and no owner will be; under any circumstances, allowed to even mount his horse until Mr B. declares the education complete.

T. K. WHITELY, *Printer, Darlington.*

I wrote the story of what followed on this in the book, *Blair Athol,*[1] published a few years afterwards, and it there appears that the circulars were dispatched to the York and Ainsty men a day before there was a meet at Thirkleby Park. I myself went there in mufti, on old Cobweb, whom no one would suspect of carrying Joseph Rawlinson Battersby.

There was a large meet, and among those present was Mr Willoughby himself, who was audaciously referred to in the circular. He had a week or two earlier won a point-to-point steeplechase on his horse, Langar, whom he bought from the Rev. Cecil Legard, and it was for this reason Battersby pointed to that special animal as the one he had schooled, for the name was at the time very familiar to all the hunting men.

As I moved about, exchanging greetings here and there, with friends, there was but one word that struck on my ears from every group that I passed by—that was

[1] George Routledge & Sons Ltd.

"Battersby." Discussion on that topic was universal, and abounded chiefly in the neighbourhood of the unfortunate Willoughby, who came in for a constant fire of questions on the subject.

There was something absolutely delicious in all this—at least, so I thought—and I entered with zest into the various conversations. Very difficult, however, was it to avoid bursting into fits of laughter now and again, so exquisite was the irony of the situation.

Here, for instance, was a gallant captain of the 9th Lancers who, as his horse bucked with unexpected vigour over a small fence, showed very much daylight. "Hullo, there," cried a friend, "Joseph Rawlinson Battersby will soon be having his eye on you!"

"Yes, indeed," I thought, "he is much nearer than you imagine."

"I say, Willoughby," asked Sir George Wombwell, riding up to that gentleman for the first time that morning. "Who *is* this Rawlinson Battersby? You know him, I see. Upon my word I half thought the thing was a hoax: but after all, it seems genuine enough. Who *is* he?"

Mr Willoughby for the twentieth time indignantly repudiated the alleged mentor of Langar: but the impression appeared to prevail that Battersby had let out a secret which the owner of the horse did not wish to be known. He had hitherto had all the credit connected with Langar and his performances to himself: small wonder then that he did not like these facts being disclosed.

"Take care, my horse kicks," cried someone. "Send him to Battersby," was the immediate response from several voices.

"I really think I will: he can't make him worse, and he may make him better."

"I will give him this mare," said another gallant captain, "if he can make her jump water."

And so the amusement went on throughout the day, no one seeming to doubt for a moment that Battersby is an actual being destined soon to be among them.

Such a story loses greatly in the telling, and must necessarily depend much on the imagination of the reader. Let anyone, however, endeavour to put himself in my position that day and he will realise, according to his capacities, what a " merry conceit " the whole affair was, not that the sport was by any means over yet : for the Bedale men remained, and to them the circular was dispatched the day before a meet at Skipton Bridge.

Of course I went, riding Longbow this time, but my expectation of hearing much talk about Battersby was disappointed, and therein the difference between the gentlemen of the Bedale and those of the York and Ainsty was very notable.

Exceedingly cautious were they of the Bedale in those days, whatever they may be now : indeed, when it came to a really good thing, John Booth, the Master, could show them all a clean pair of heels, despite the fact of his riding eighteen stone. But then his heart was in the right place : he knew every inch of the country, and his horses, besides being grand animals, were preternaturally clever, for which, of course, the credit was due to him who " made " them. In short, the Master was in strong contrast to the members of his Hunt, with a few honourable exceptions.

Now these gentlemen, having received their circulars, had taken them to heart. Each one was inwardly conscious of his own inferior horsemanship, and therefore thought that he, and he specially, had been singled out by the observant eye of Battersby. In these circumstances, no man communicated to his fellow what had happened. Each brooded darkly over his own circular and kept it concealed from mortal ken, deeply pondering where, when and how Battersby had spotted him, or whether it was simply common fame that had reported him to that accomplished person as being one likely to stand in need of his services. Moreover, there was not much time for discussion, for Baldersby Whin was always a sure find, and this occasion proved no exception.

Within a few minutes, hounds were away after a good

fox on the far side of the Whin, and we all had to hustle along round the bottom corner to get to them as quickly as might be. It was soon found that they were racing away in glorious style.

"They're going now, sir, aren't they?" called out Thatcher, the huntsman, to me. I remember him very well, as also Tom Carr his predecessor. Both were rare good men.

The country was not very formidable, but the Master was a good field ahead and would need a lot of catching. There was no sign of the pace abating: it was simply astonishing, and already there was very long tail to the field, not caused as usual by obstacles, but simply by want of sufficient speed. Before we had gone ten minutes there were but thirteen or fourteen within hail. I was there, for Longbow could gallop a bit and had run second in one of the college "grinds" that year, but the Master still showed the way, his horse having an extraordinary turn of speed for such a heavy one.

The line was now over the grassland along the side of the River Swale. It was capital going, but a trifle heavy, as it lies low and has to be fenced off from the river by a high embankment. Hounds were now stretching away, sterns down and nearly mute. The Master seemed to be coming back to his field at last, but it was really because he was in momentary doubt about his line. Suddenly I saw him diverge at right angles and gallop away as hard as he could in the direction of the Swale embankment.

That he had good and sufficient reason for doing this I did not for a moment doubt, so followed him at once. One of the Whips followed me, but Thatcher and all the rest of the field went straight on after hounds.

The Master gained the top of the Swale embankment, which is not over five feet wide there, but gets gradually broader towards its base, and he cantered gaily along this eminence fully fifteen feet above the level of the subjacent ground. I and the Whip pursued, scarce knowing what to think, but on reaching the top I saw, with some

[Registration fee, 2s 6d.]

HUNTING CERTIFICATE.

I hereby certify that I have seen Mr. Mr. Allison's

Bay Horse "Longbow" hunted regularly with my Hounds

The Bedale during the present season 1895 6

Signed John B. Bates

Address Killerby - Catterick

Date March 15th 1896

LONGBOW

apprehension, double posts and rails, very stiff too, looming in front, and the Master was just going for them. His big horse, clever as a cat, nipped in and out with the greatest safety.

I looked wistfully at the hedge which ran down into the field below, to see if by any chance it was more easily negotiable, but it was an ancient and absolutely impervious bullfinch. These rails, with a fifteen-feet roll down one side or the other, if you fell, were the only possible place of egress. So I had just to trust to Providence—for Longbow was not an accomplished jumper of cramped places—I cantered quietly up to the objectionable object, and the result was all right: not what one might call a "fluent" performance, as there was a stop short, a bounce up and down, a stop and another bounce: then the other side, and a descent of the embankment after the Master, who was bustling along more eagerly than ever. A glance back to see the Whip safely over, and then away.

In a few moments we saw hounds once more and were soon with them: but the field was nowhere visible, nor were they ever visible so long as we three were within sight of those rails on the embankment.

It turned out they had all been hopelessly pounded, as the Master well knew they would be.

The big weight-carrier still forced the pace, and my good horse could not gain an inch on him. The Whip was now dropping astern. On we went. What a lathering and soaping of reins there was! There was also that awkward feeling of having nothing to spare at the fences, and I even began to think I should have to finish the run on foot as Longbow pecked badly on, landing over a small stake and bound. What a man that John Booth was!

Newton House was not far off now, and surely to goodness this could not last much longer. Ha! The Master had viewed him and was cramming forward with a final spurt. "Yonder he goes!" I, too, saw him plodding along dead beat, only a field in front of hounds: he disappeared through a hedge; now hounds were after him;

had they run into him? No; they were at fault, and were spreading to cast themselves in that very field into which we viewed the fox only a few moments ago. Had he lain down in a ditch and been overrun? No, it was not so; and, strange though it may appear, nothing more was ever made out of that fox. That he had crept off somewhere and was lying helpless with exhaustion is practically certain; but where could not be discovered, though it must have been close at hand.

"At any rate," said the Master, wiping his brow, "we've had one of the best gallops I ever remember." Then pulling out his watch: "Thirty-seven minutes, and from Baldersby Whin to Newton House is over seven miles. That's fast enough in all conscience."

The facts of this run, as given here, are recorded in *Blair Athol*, and I may add that John Booth, having read the book, corroborated the account in every detail. I rode Longbow in many another run with the Bedale, and his portrait with John Booth's certificate appears in this work, but that run from Baldersby Whin to Newton House was the best of all, and it was through no merit of my own that I was in it, except indeed that I had the sense to follow John Booth.

The sequel to the Joseph Rawlinson Battersby affair was that the "Van Driver" of *Baily's Magazine* took it up seriously and criticised the circular with ponderous sarcasm, printing several of the rules in italics—"The italics are our own," said the "Van Driver." He also said, with bitter irony: "Mr Battersby is going into Yorkshire, a country where people are notoriously incompetent to manage horses: so we wish him the success he deserves."

Especially, however, was he moved by the reference to Mr Arthur Yates and Mr Ernest Willoughby.

"Unfortunate Mr Battersby!" wrote he, "what induced you to put such an awful crammer upon paper? We have been at some trouble to investigate the matter, and would our readers believe it?—Mr Arthur Yates

and Mr Ernest Willoughby *never even heard of Mr Battersby!*"

The solemnity with which these strictures of *Baily's* were given was perhaps one of the best points of the whole performance, which was wound up by the following supplementary circular :—

Mr JOSEPH RAWLINSON BATTERSBY regrets to say that, owing to domestic affliction, he has been prevented from coming to York as announced by him.

For the above reason he did not go to Yarm, and he fears that, in the cares and anxieties to which he has been subjected, he may have suffered some of his letters addressed there to be returned to the writers.

He has heard that Mr Arthur Yates and Mr Ernest Willoughby deny all knowledge of him. So be it: The infant, budding into adolescence, shakes off the hand that has guided its hitherto tottering steps ; and it is thus that they, mounted on their now perfect horses, repudiate J. R. B.

Were he so disposed, proof would not be wanting ; such proof he scorns to give.

A time will come when Yorkshire gentlemen will see him flitting, meteor-like, through the fastest run, and gazing from afar, they will confess that his own intrinsic merit is a recommendation all-sufficient for *Joseph Rawlinson Battersby*.

A. P. HARDCASTLE, *Printer, Cheltenham.*

These circulars were posted in Cheltenham and created additional sensation. That they persisted as against Mr Willoughby and Mr Arthur Yates was the most remarkable part of them, and the friends of those gentlemen more than half believed the impeachment.

It was long before it became known that Battersby was not genuine business, and then the late Major Fife Cookson, who at the time was a cavalry subaltern, stationed at York, was charged with being the author of the circulars. He did not deny the impeachment very strenuously, and for many years he had the reputation of having perpetrated this jest ; but it was I who write who did it, and even carried it further at one period by challenging Galvayne to a public match at horse-breaking and taming. This challenge was issued by letter in *The*

Yorkshire Herald and signed "Joseph Rawlinson Battersby." I have not a copy by me, but it was sufficiently bombastic, and maybe Galvayne did not like it.

I feel desperately inclined to linger over experiences of those early hunting days, especially over really glorious runs with Jack Parker and the Sinnington, when the then Lord Helmsley used to go like a pigeon, and his father, Lord Feversham, was panic-stricken at the way in which his son and heir rode. A run from Gilling Wood to Seamer Wood is accurately described in *Blair Athol*, the names of those concerned being only slightly disguised. There let it remain, for I have not space to reproduce it here, lovely experience though it was. I have got through more than half this book—before I was twenty-three.

CHAPTER XX

The Distraction of *Madame Angot*—Patty Laverne—Final Schools—The Class List—A Fellow of All Souls—Divinity Examination—Late Degrees—Vicars and his Class List—Sir Charles Dodsworth—King Lud's Race for the Alexandra Plate—End of the Oxford Period—Why moralise about it?

MOST of us remember early days better than the later ones, and, be that as it may, I must begin to cut short the last stages of the Oxford time—that was the first two terms of 1874, when, partly because I liked my tutor, Dendy, and partly because I had cut adrift from the Balliol dons, I wished to make a final flare-up in jurisprudence.

Thus it was that serious reading was done, but never after 11 P.M. At that hour precisely the drinks would be brought up, and even in the middle of a sentence books would be closed—I write only of myself.

Justinian, Hallam, Austin, Grote and goodness knows how many other authorities one dealt with: but Dendy's lectures were a masterpiece, and a real bogey to all examiners.

The Easter vacation came on, and some of us in 77 George Street, being virtuously resolved to do our best, decided to stay up and read, without going down at all. This was our proposal, and we proceeded to carry it out, but it should be explained that in my time theatrical performances were not allowed at Oxford, except, of course, in vacation, when the sway of the proctors had ceased.

It happened that in this particular Easter vacation Mrs Liston brought down a very good company to play *Madame Angot* at the Old Vic., with Patty Laverne as Clairette. We endured this for the first night, but heard so much of the performance the following day that we

decided to take just one evening off and see the show, which we did from a stage box.

Madame Angot has never been surpassed for attraction, and that performance was a genuine delight to jaded undergraduates, but when I caught sight of two or three men from another college who were just in view behind the wings, there came an immediate wish to outpoint them. Early next morning, therefore, I wired to Mrs Anne Warner, the Bedford Hotel, Covent Garden:

"Send hamper of choicest cut flowers and several good bouquets to 77 George Street Oxford.

"ALLISON."

My good old friend of the Bedford Hotel acted splendidly on this wire.

Before that evening's performance there were flowers enough to deck the stage and the whole company, and I know not how many bouquets—enough, at any rate, for Mrs Liston and all the leading ladies.

Now let no mistake be made. This was done simply and solely to knock out the audacious men who had managed to get behind the scenes, and it most effectually did so. For the rest, we had no thought of ill, and having made friends with old Mrs Liston and the rest, we took them about Oxford, showed them the colleges, and went to the theatre every night while the show lasted. Patty Laverne was a dear little woman, one of the best, and quite beyond reproach. She was such a good Clairette, however, that I, who became quite infatuated with *Madame Angot*, went on to Bristol with the company when they left Oxford—and that was after the last term had begun. Again it was a case of attending the theatre and sending in flowers every night, and I would not mention it here had there been any trace of wrong in it. Patty Laverne is dead now, but I fancy her Clairette must be a living memory to all who ever saw it.

It may be that I returned with a heavy heart to Oxford,

after that week at Bristol, but she gave me good advice to do so; and there was the gloomy prospect of final schools to face. Women can make or mar us at most times, but especially when we are young, and I was young —as the world then was—and full of money. She found out about the impending examination, and drove me back to Oxford kindly but inexorably. Many years afterwards I heard from Haddon Chambers, who knew her, that she retained a happy recollection of me, as I shall always do of her, both as a good woman and a thorough artist.

Well, there it was, I got back to Oxford and Jurisprudence, after three weeks of absolutely novel life and laxity. There was nothing for it but to redeem the time, though the days had been anything but evil, and there was always the wish to do credit to Dendy and fox-hunting, as also to surprise the Balliol dons who were not concerned in my preparation. To some extent the feeling was the same as at Rugby, but I liked all the Balliol dons well enough, and can truly say that, with very few exceptions, I intensely disliked the Rugby masters. Few people can analyse their own motives, but I fancy my trouble has always been that I was left my own master so early that I play a lone hand unless someone in authority of a very rare nature has got in sympathy with me, as Jex-Blake did, or as Dendy did—in another sense. Well, after all, it does not matter: but, curiously enough, Patty Laverne helped, and I set about those last few weeks of Jurisprudence with full determination that the thing should be done.

The time was very short, however, and just at that period was published the first volume of Stubbs's *Constitutional History*.

It should be explained that the schools of History and Law had only just been divided, and while Hallam's *Constitutional Law* was a fitting text-book for us, Stubbs's *Constitutional History* was, on the face of it, outside our sphere.

But I had my doubts, and asked Mr Dendy if I should

read this volume. He knew well that I was working at top pressure to get through the absolutely essential books, and he said I need not trouble about Stubbs. So the time went on, and having put in the highest possible power in the last few weeks, save for a few days in town to dinner at the Temple and go to Ascot, I was strung up to dreadful concert pitch for that examination.

To my mind there is no earthly good in an examination, except in so far as it shows what you can do in an emergency.

There was no trouble whatever in any of the papers save one, and that came second or third. It was entitled "Constitutional *History*" — though we were to be examined in constitutional *Law*; and eight or nine questions out of twelve were set straight out of Stubbs, whose book I had never read.

That was indeed an awful situation, and several of my friends, who were in the same case as myself, gave it up in despair, but after spending ten minutes in that same condition, I began to look at the questions, and realised that I had some ideas of my own about them regardless of Stubbs. Therefore I fell to, and wrote voluminously all round about those questions, lugging in any special item of knowledge likely to catch the fancy of an examiner, and connecting it, however indirectly, with the subject matter of the question. It is no use advising people about how to pass examinations. I could always write fast and readily, and, at whatever pace, my handwriting is legible. That last point is half the battle with examiners. On the other hand, my friend, the late C. A. Whitmore, who was in for this same examination, wrote slowly and with great precision. He marshalled his facts concisely and, on the whole, covered about a quarter of the paper that I did. Let every man do what suits him best. I could not possibly have answered those questions in the way that Whitmore did, and I am still more certain that he could not have dashed into them in the way that I did, but the result tells its own tale, and, in this con-

nection, I must needs quote a letter written to my sister on 11th July 1874:

UNION CLUB, OXFORD.

I have no time to write much, except to inform you that the deed is done, and the old men's wiles have been in vain, as you will see on looking into the Class list in to-day's *Times* or *Standard*.

And now it is permissible, I hope, to reproduce that Class list here.

TRINITY TERM, 1874

IN JURISPRUDENTIÂ

CLASS I

Allison, W., Ball.
Eastwick, J., Trin.
Whitmore, C. A., Ball.

CLASS II

Coolidge, W. A. B., Exeter.
Hardy, G. H., Ch. Ch.
Maddison, F. B., Bras.
Robin, A. H., New.
Stuart Wortley, C. B., Ball.

CLASS III

Bellairs, H. L., Worc.
Deacon, E. A., Exeter.
Ferard, C. A., Trin.
Lawrence, J. R., Ch. Ch.
Trotter, E. B., Univ.
Vawdrey, D., Corpus.
Wilde, J. D., Bras.
Williams, J., Linc.
Young, J. F., Bras.

CLASS IV

Cree, A. W., Exeter.
Lempriere, E. P., St J.
Whiteford, B., New.

Examiners.—J. Bryce, H. J. S. Maine, T. E. Holland.

There it is, and I look on the list even now with some pleasure, recalling the time when Warner and two or three other friends dashed into my room at 77 George Street, brandishing my *testamur*, which they had somehow secured, which stated in regard to my poor self: "In Classem I., relegatus est"—I think that was how it ran, but I have not a *testamur* by me to verify the reference, and it is of no earthly consequence.

So that ended my Oxford show, much in the same way that the career at Rugby had terminated, but I stayed up for a week or two after the result was known and took somewhat paltry pleasure in being congratulated by the Balliol dons. They were not like the Rugby masters, and I am sure now that they were quite pleased at what I had done. Many years later the Master was good enough to write about me:

BALLIOL COLLEGE,
Nov. 19th, 1888.

Mr Allison was a Member of Balliol College about fifteen years ago. He obtained a first-class in Jurisprudence. From what I remember of him I should say with confidence that he was a man of considerable ability, of gentlemanlike manners and of good character.

B. JOWETT,
Master of Balliol College.

That was pretty good, all things considered, but it suggests somehow a falling off since the days at Rugby with Jex-Blake, who wrote the following:—

ALVECHURCH,
November 14th, 1888.

Mr William Allison was a boy in my house at Rugby, 1865-1868, highly gifted and entirely satisfactory. Others will speak of his later years, but I should expect that his charming temper and remarkable skill in composition distinguish him still. I believe that at Oxford health stood in his way.

T. W. JEX-BLAKE.

I am writing a true story, or I would not quote those

letters, which to me bring only regret for the "might-have-been." I have already made it clear what the "health" obstacle amounted to. Surely all the promise that ever was in me in those days was but Dead Sea fruit, and yet there were times when I thought there was no object of ambition to which I could not readily attain—so fatally easy was it to pass examinations after a few weeks of work!

That last week or ten days at Oxford was a happy time, with all the working wheels run down, and so many good friends to entertain and be entertained by. I saw much of John Doyle, and he strongly advised me to go in for a Fellowship at All Souls, as there were three vacancies, and I decided to follow his advice, for a Fellow of All Souls is not as the Fellows of other colleges, and it would have been very delightful to be in the same good fellowship with Doyle himself. The thing was all but settled when, alas! a flaw was discovered in my qualifications.

To become a Fellow of All Souls you must have either graduated with a First Class in Final Schools or have passed all the necessary examinations for so graduating.

It was suddenly discovered that I had not passed my Divinity examination, and that is, or was, essential before taking your degree. There was no fixture for a Divinity examination before the All Souls fellowships were to be decided, and I, therefore, could not qualify in time.

In sheer annoyance at this, I left Oxford without going in for Divinity at all, and it was not until two years later that I came to a more sensible frame of mind and went up for the simple purpose of passing Divinity, which was an absurdly easy thing to do. Even so, however, so neglectful was I of my own interests that I did not put my gown on until twenty years later, when I brought off the "double event" of B.A. and M.A., on one morning in 1896. The Balliol porter was rather interested in that occasion, and provided me with all the necessary gowns, etc., and first of all it was pleasant in that year, 1896, to put on a Cap and undergraduate's gown and walk down High Street, causing a certain amount of mild

surprise—for who had ever seen an undergraduate of such age? The rest was a mere question of formula and quick changing, the porter being outside with fresh robes ready for each step of my ascent. There are fees, of course, to be paid; but otherwise the experience was quite a pleasant one.

I ought not to rush so far ahead of the period with which I have been dealing, but it is perhaps legitimate to explain briefly how and when the finishing touch was put on to my Oxford career. There is at least this advantage derivable from the process, that I have a vote for the Parliamentary representation of the University of Oxford, and that is something to say in these days, when plural voting is a thing of the past.

I cannot forbear to tell the story of poor old Vicars' final Class list, though it was a sad disappointment to him. He had stuck to Classical Greats—*Literæ Humaniores*—and was supposed to have an outside chance of a First. I happened to go with him into the Union as we were coming up from boating, and there was the Class list on view. H. H. Asquith was, of course, in the First Class, but Vicars was not there. We looked through the Second—in vain: and then we drew the Third blank. I could see that Vicars was becoming wrathful, and as I glanced at the fourth class and found his name placed in alphabetical order, at the very bottom, I turned and fled, for he would, on the spur of the moment, have avenged himself on me, for lack of any more blameworthy object. After all, it should be remembered these classes constitute Honours, and even the Fourth Class is entirely superior to a Pass degree. In the Michaelmas term of 1874 Warner got his First, all right, in *Literæ Humaniores*, and Prothero got a First in Modern History in 1875.

FitzRoy (Sir Almeric) had done the same in 1874, having by that time mastered the knack of doing examinations.

One good friend at Balliol whom I have not mentioned as yet, for he has been dead many years, was Sir Charles Dodsworth, whose introduction to me was on the sands at

Redcar, where we were both digging when the guns were fired at Hartlepool on the signing of the Treaty of Paris after the Crimean War. I shall have a good and interesting story to tell about Sir Charles Dodsworth presently. His early death was a serious blow to north-country training interests as his estate included a considerable part of the Hambleton Gallops, and his brother, who succeeded to the title, is not friendly to racing—at least, so I have always understood.

I have written that I went to Ascot that year, 1874, but I find, on reference, that I was there on the last day only, for I did not see Boiard win the Cup, with Doncaster and Flageolet dead-heating behind him, and Kaiser next, in front of Gang Forward and Marie Stuart; but I did see King Lud beat Boiard for the Alexandra Plate the following day, and that was a race never to be forgotten. The stamina shown by King Lud when the Frenchman was palpably outpacing him all the way from the turn into the straight is unparalleled in my experience except by that of Torpoint, who wore down Radium in similar fashion for the same race not many years ago. But Boiard was an exceptionally great horse, and it was only by a head that King Lud just did him. Custance in his book suggests that Boiard's jockey, Carratt, was to blame rather than the horse, but I did not see the race in that light at all, and in any case nothing can rob King Lud of the fame of that victory, which was due to his undying courage and stamina. It is much to be regretted that he did not establish a male line of descent, for he was by King Tom out of Qui Vive (sister to Vedette).

Well, let me close this chapter and thus finish the Oxford period, which can never be lacking in happy memories, and yet rises up against me as having been mainly conspicuous for wasted opportunities. It is useless to moralise on the past, however, when the present is still with us, and, even late in the day, may be perhaps made good use of.

CHAPTER XXI

The Cobham Stud, 1874—My First Visit—York and Doncaster—Apology and Lily Agnes—Prince Charlie's Last Triumph—Life in Town—In a Pleader's Chambers—Claremont wins the 2000 Guineas—First Sight of Galopin—A Night at Cremorne—Sir Charles Dodsworth determined to bet—Great Result—I become a Director of the Cobham Stud—The Purchase of Doncaster and Marie Stuart prevented by a Solicitor—A London Season—Sandown Park

IN June, 1874, I made my first acquaintance with the Cobham stud, where the Stud Company Limited was in its early days, and apparently on the high road to success. They had bought Blair Athol and all the best of the old Middle Park stud's brood mares and foals two years earlier, and the world seemed to be going very well with the Company. I cannot ear-mark the exact date of my visit to Cobham, but it must have been during a hasty visit to town for the purpose of keeping my term at the Inner Temple. Lindsay Smith went with me, and we went on the Guildford coach as far as the White Lion at Cobham, walking the rest of the way to the stud. The manager was not at home, but we saw Mrs Bell, and under the guidance of Joseph Griffiths, the stud groom, interviewed Blair Athol, and all the famous mares, such as Margery Daw, Madame Eglentine, etc., also the yearlings that were soon coming up for sale. Among these I remember a beautiful chestnut colt by Blair Athol, out of Alcestis, by Touchstone, and another chestnut by the same sire out of Circe, by Dundee. They made long prices at the sale, being bought by Captain Machell, but neither did any good on the turf. In fact, the yearlings of 1874 were (saving always for the two cheap lots, Coronella and Bella, sold for 60 guineas and 40 guineas respectively) the worst that the

Stud Company ever disposed of, and the total they realised was by far the lowest: but, even so, I had seen enough to make me long to have a practical interest in this company, and before we caught the coach on its return journey from Guildford I had resolved to secure shares in the Stud Company Limited, if it were by any means possible. Little did I know at that time how not merely possible but easy it would be to secure any number of such shares in the Company, whose nominal share capital was £100,000, but whose principal cash supply had been provided by Mr John Coupland (Master of the Quorn) on the security of 10 per cent. debentures repayable in three years.

This visit to Cobham was but the initial episode, and I did not act on it at that time, but the seed was germinating. Meanwhile came the finish at Oxford as recorded in the last chapter, and a good time at home for the rest of the year. My sister had by that time married our good friend, Tom Scott, and we three went to live at Kilvington, where I built new and excellent kennels on the plans recommended by Beckford.

Both Tom Scott and I were in considerable request as judges of fox-terriers at dog shows about that time, and Mr Arrowsmith was also quite keen about terriers, of whom he bred some first-class ones, notably Satire, by Jester, winner in a class of 109 competitors at Nottingham, with the Hon. Tom Fitzwilliam judging.

York August Meeting that year was a very interesting one. Glenalmond (by Blair Athol out of Coimbra), who had started favourite for the Derby, won the North of England Biennial, two miles, very easily, and was again fancied for the St Leger.

He was a beautiful, medium-sized bay colt, with all the Kingston quality of his dam. The Prince of Wales Stakes was won by Holy Friar, a chestnut colt who in the opinion of Mr Chaplin was the best of all Hermit's sons. Earl of Dartrey, who was, I think, the only unquestionable son of the Earl, won a two-year-old Biennial, and Trent, an exquisitely moulded little bay son of

Broomielaw, beat Apology by a head for the great Yorkshire Stakes. In those times this race used to have a material bearing on the St Leger. Then, too, we saw Lily Agnes, three years, beat Kaiser, four years, for the York Cup. It was a great meeting.

Naturally we went to Doncaster and saw Apology win the St Leger, after George Frederick had been scratched, and she herself had been very nearly so, on account of lameness. Lame or not, she reversed the York running with Trent very decisively as he was third six and a half lengths behind her. Glenalmond once more disappointed, though he was backed at 11 to 2. Apology was a chestnut mare with plenty of power and substance. She ought to have become a successful matron, but for some reason she did not, whereas Lily Agnes, who won the Queen's Plate on that St Leger afternoon, beating Lilian by three lengths, became, in process of time, the dam of Ormonde and Ornament.

I do not wish to dilate here on this or any other ancient racing season, but I may just mention that at the finish of the Houghton Meeting of 1874, Prince Charlie gave the Cambridgeshire winner Peut-être 12 lb. over the Rowley mile in a match for 500 sovereigns, and with odds of 2 to 1 on him, won in a canter, thus winding up his glorious career on the turf. It was on the Tuesday that Peut-être had won the Cambridgeshire by two lengths, starting second favourite and beating forty-one others. The great match was not until the Saturday, so the French colt had had ample time between the races. Such a scene as followed on Prince Charlie's last triumph has seldom been witnessed on Newmarket Heath.

The next stage, so far as I was concerned, was to take up my quarters in town in 1875 and set about work for a year in a Special Pleader's chambers. I found good rooms on the ground floor of 24 St James's Place, and Arthur Blackwood, whose father was one of the Dalgety and Du Croz firm, had the first floor. A Mrs Jewell was our landlady and, I think, her husband was employed at

the Conservative Club near by. We were very comfortable, and I remained there until the end of my bachelor days.

The Special Pleader in whose chambers I did my year, paying 100 guineas for that privilege, was the late Mr Butterworth of the Inner Temple. It was before the passing of the Judicature Act, so that we became adepts in all the old forms of declarations and other curious pleadings. Stuart Wortley was in those chambers with me, and so was Braxton Hicks, who later on became an eminent coroner—in so far as a coroner can ever be eminent. Brynmor Jones was also there, but I forget the others. We had the use of all the necessary books, and whatever work came in for Mr Butterworth to do we did it in the first instance. Then he revised our drafts, made such emendations as he thought fit, and so the thing was settled, we profiting by noting what he had found necessary to alter and how. It was rather interesting work, and by no means arduous.

I paid my first visit to Newmarket that spring, 1875, by going with Blackwood to see the 2000 Guineas run for, and two points are so fixed in memory as a result of that visit that I do not very clearly recall any general impression. One is that as I stood on the high ground on the far side of the course and could see over the judge's box, which was then on that side, I saw Claremont win the 2000 Guineas by a clear length or more. He was by himself, wide on the right-hand side of the course, while the rest of the field were all bunched on the stands' side. Claremont finished right under the judge's box, and must have passed unnoticed, for he was not even placed, whereas I, who saw him very clearly, and that in a bee-line across the judge's box to the post, am quite sure that he actually won, and that, too, very cleverly.

He had been a 2000-guinea yearling at the first Cobham sale, and as a son of Blair Athol and Coimbra he was naturally a favourite of mine, but no such fancies led me to think he had done more than I actually saw him do. Later results demonstrated that I made no mistake.

The next salient point of that day was that I saw Galopin for the first time. He was brought into the paddock to accustom him, as far as possible, to a crowd; and he looked like anything but the great champion that he was destined to become. He was a medium-sized colt, of no great substance or bone, but with great quality. He was in a black sweat—saving for lather—so nearly mad was he with excitement; but with him and all the best of his sons this condition was nothing akin to fear but simply demonstrated highly-strung nerves which when the time for action came carried them through many a close struggle.

Such, however, was Galopin on that day, and it would have passed the prescience of any prophet who ever lived to anticipate then the coming of Galopin's sons, St Simon, Donovan, Galliard and other great ones, or his daughters, of whom Galicia, dam of Bayardo and Lemberg, is the most recently famous.

I returned to town from Newmarket with a rooted belief that Claremont would win the Derby, and forthwith took steps to acquire shares in the Stud Company Limited (Cobham). This proved to be easy. I was invited down to the city, when the secretary, named Kendrick, received me with much courtesy and full financial explanations. I did not understand the latter but soon invested £1000, to begin with, and felt positive joy in being part owner of Blair Athol. Naturally I took an early opportunity to go down to see the Stud, and this time met the manager, Mr Richard Bell, who as a showman was unrivalled. It was a really happy day, and there was a superb chestnut colt foal (own brother to Lady Love), by Blair Athol, out of Vergiss-mein-Nicht, by the Flying Dutchman. Looking at this colt, both Mr Bell and I became more than ever convinced that Lady Love would win the Oaks, and there was no secret about Lord Falmouth's preference of her to his other filly, Spinaway, who had won the 1000 Guineas.

During the week before Epsom Sir Charles Dodsworth came up to town, and wished to make the best of his time,

so it happened that I repaired with him to Cremorne and, being both of us young and happy, we went in for all the "fun of the fair"—if it may be so styled. We danced round the monster platform and engaged in the many other frivolities, ending up by winning all sorts of absurd prizes at the various shooting and other skill contests. These prizes we carried off in triumph and a hansom to my rooms. It was then getting on to three A.M., and there was a strong wind blowing.

My friend, after taking a whisky and soda, suddenly produced a sheaf of Bank of England notes from a pocket of his greatcoat, and said: "Here is £500. I want you to take it and bet with it for me at Epsom."

Such a proposal reduced me to immediate gravity, and I told him not to be a fool—or words to that effect.

On that he rushed to the window, opened it wide and, holding the notes far outside it, cried:

"Look here, if you won't do it, I swear I'll throw them out into the street!"

The wind was howling, and I knew that in his then frame of mind he would do what he said unless I humoured his whim, so I said: "All right, give me the notes."

He handed them over, and I deposited them safely in my bedroom. Shortly afterwards he departed, and I went to bed and slept.

Next morning I wondered if the incident had been an unpleasant dream, but no, there were the bank-notes when I went to look for them: and the first instinct was to act like the unprofitable servant and bury them until after Epsom so as to return them intact: but, after all, the unprofitable servant got into trouble for being an anti-gambler, and, being young and hopeful, I decided to let Sir Charles have a run for his money.

Then came the question what to do with it. I was going to have my own trifle on Claremont for the Derby and Lady Love for the Oaks. Should I do the same for him?

At first thought of this, I became conscious that my own

fancy was somewhat prejudiced and not good enough to risk another man's money on, so after careful deliberation I sent the money across to George Crook, at Boulogne, with instructions that £200 of it was to go on Claremont—1, 2, 3—for the Derby and £300 on Lord Falmouth's pair for the Oaks, leaving it to him to do the best he could.

Sir Charles Dodsworth had returned to Yorkshire the morning after leaving the money with me.

George Crook executed the commission admirably, and both bets came off all right. Claremont was second for the Derby and Lord Falmouth's pair, Spinaway and Lady Love, were first and second for the Oaks. What the total return for these bets was I do not remember, but it was a very large sum: and my own two small bets were both lost.

Sir Charles Dodsworth came up to town forthwith on hearing the good news, and asked me to go with him to Tattersalls and help to buy hunters. Between us we picked some of the best, and he bought—I think—four, as good as a man could wish to own. His next whim was that we should ride these horses in the Row to see how they went.

I had gone with him thus far, but there I drew the line, for to ride strange horses in the Row, to the possible danger of other people, was a tall order indeed, and it was somewhere about the time when *The Galloping Snob of Rotten Row* was a song which found much vogue. Moreover, I talked to him with newly found prudence and earnestly exhorted him never again to dream of betting in such a rash and ridiculous manner. I pointed out, too—as I remember well—that he had placed me in an unfair position, for had I lost the money, as might well have happened, some of his friends would have been sure to think I had stuck to it. He declared he had no friends who would dare to think that. But the upshot of it all was that he let well alone, and I don't think he ever made another bet. He certainly never asked me to make another for him.

He was a good, cheery sportsman, and was very well known with the Bedale hounds, about which he wrote some verses that were widely appreciated, but are perhaps forgotten now.

If anyone asks why I sent the money over to George Crook, it was because I really knew nothing about betting on a large scale myself, and had such a pleasant recollection of him from having won over Kingcraft. About ten years ago—or it may be rather more—George Crook sent me several bottles of excellent punch in memory of the Dodsworth commission.

The inner working of the Oaks that year will perhaps never be known, but Lord Dudley lost many thousands over Lady Love, whom both Lord Falmouth and Mathew Dawson preferred to Spinaway. Archer rode the latter and Constable the former. Sister to Musket made a good race with Spinaway until within the distance, and Lady Love was always handy. Then, when Spinaway had shaken off the only outside adversary and drawn clear, Constable shook up Lady Love and took second place without an effort. Lady Love was one of the most beautiful mares I ever saw, and she lives in many good pedigrees to-day.

I went to the Derby by road from Cobham, where I was staying with the manager, and I had to sleep out the night before at the Plough Inn—a curious experience in its way, for everyone there was interested in Claremont. Claremont was beaten a length by Galopin, and my own idea that the winner was all out has recently been confirmed by Joe Cannon, who trained Claremont, whom they fancied very much until a gallop the week before had somewhat disappointed them. Claremont finished four lengths in front of the third, so that he and Galopin were out by themselves. Garterley Bell, whose brother, Silvio, won the Derby of 1877, was fourth, but he was touched in his wind.

Those were the beginnings of great days for Blair Athol and Cobham, and I had already rushed much more capital into the Company, which necessitated disposing of

securities of a more tangible character. I had also been made a director of the Company, which pleased me vastly, though my reason for pleasure may have been no more satisfactory than that of the man who is married for his money. I was the youngest member of the Board. Sir Charles Legard was the chairman, and there were several older men, including Captain Patrick. Lord Charles Ker, who had been instrumental in retaining the yearling, Bella, for the Company, in 1874, was the nearest approach to me in point of age, and I shall not offend him by adding that he was no more businesslike than I was.

They were halcyon days indeed, and before Ascot that summer we were offered Doncaster and Marie Stuart, with their engagements, for 8000 guineas. It was resolved to buy them, and then the solicitor of the Company—after the manner of solicitors—interposed obstacles. We had no right under the Articles of Association to run horses. I suggested that they might run in the name of a director; but then the old men raised the question of personal responsibility in the event of accident. There was no horse insurance in those days, and so it happened that I, though anxious to take the risks, was overborne, and this astounding bargain was suffered to lapse. It would have changed the whole future of British blood-stock, as we know it, had the purchase been completed.

When Ascot came on, Marie Stuart won the Gold Vase, and Doncaster the Cup and Alexandra Plate—each race with great ease. I can see him now, striding past the stands in the finish for the Plate, with his tongue lolloping out of his mouth on the near side and flopping up and down with every stride. This peculiarity was handed down to many of his descendants, and it must always be arguable whether Orme did not owe his supposed poisoning to working his tongue over a decayed tooth.

The Cobham sale was on the 12th June 1875, the Saturday of Ascot, as always, and it was a very notable one in many ways—to me, for instance, because I there saw for the first time my future wife, on a coach at the

ring-side, but I am not going to write more on that subject, except that it was a happy incident.

The yearlings made 14,885 guineas, an average of 391 guineas for 38, and among them was Dee, by Blair Athol, sold for 500 guineas; Macaroon, by Macaroni, out of Margery Daw, sold for 1700 guineas to Mr Gerard; Orleans (brother to Claremont), sold to Captain Machell for 1500 guineas; the Rover (sire of St Gatien), sold to Mr T. Brown for 1800 guineas; and Altyre, sold to Mr Beddington for 520 guineas. A filly by the Earl or the Palmer, out of Alabama, which I had bought at Thirsk, when the squire, F. Bell, died, made 170 guineas, R. Peck being the buyer. I had bought her for 50 guineas for the Company and came near to having bought Kaleidoscope on the same occasion, as already recorded.

All this, however, by no means completed the sales that were big with fate, for Mr J. T. Mackenzie, who then owned Hatchford Park, but had no idea of owning a race-horse, became excited by the proceedings, and started bidding for the chestnut colt by Blair Athol, out of Columba, and perhaps he regretted having done so when the hammer fell to his offer of 390 guineas. That colt was Rob Roy, whose successes on the turf may be truly said to have changed the tenor of Mr Mackenzie's life. He became an intimate friend of the Prince of Wales, and he also became Sir J. T. Mackenzie. Rosy Cross (then a yearling) was also sold on that same occasion for 400 guineas, and finally Macaroni, then fifteen years old, who had been leased for two years by the Company at the rate of 2500 guineas a year, came up for sale, and he made 7100 guineas, being knocked down to Mr Oldaker, who bought him for the Mentmore Stud, where King Tom (aged twenty-four) was then still alive.

In that year, 1875, George Frederick had arrived at Cobham, where also his sire, Marsyas, was standing; and Blue Gown had been secured in Germany to make his return to his native country and this particular stud, so that four Derby winners were brought into combination.

Besides the home park and paddocks there were outlying boxes and land at both Ockham and Hatchford Park, and the Stud Company owned as many as 100 brood mares. I often used to stay down there at Park Cottage with the manager, and enjoyed every hour of the time. There were some glorious foals that year. Madame Eglentine and her daughter, Jocosa, both had chestnut colts by Blair Athol, not to be surpassed.

Mr Cartwright, owner of George Frederick, had one of the best cellars in England, and he had sent, I do not know how many dozen, of priceless Beycheville, to commemorate his Derby victory and in recognition of the fact that Marsyas (sire of George Frederick) was at Cobham. That Beycheville made the evenings when I was there still more happy, and as for the purely business aspect of the Stud, it did not worry me at all.

Moreover, throughout that summer, I did my first and only London season. That is to say, I went a full round of At Homes and other functions—two or three nearly every evening—dinners and goodness knows what. How I was drawn into this vortex matters not, but I think I began at Mrs Freke's and saw Mrs Monckton and other amateur celebrities act. Mr Isidore de Lara was all the rage during that season, and I rejoice to think he has still retained his popularity. Personally, however, I had no real liking for this sort of life, and though people were kind and hospitable and I made many friends, I was really glad to get away from it all, and to Whitby Dog Show in the late summer.

At that show was a novelty which remains in memory much more clearly than the more pretentious details of that London season. It was that the Whitby bellman was employed to summon the various classes into the ring, which he did in thoroughly orthodox fashion, thus:

Oyez, Oyez, Oyez!
Class 20—In the Ring *immediately*!
Every man to his dog! God save the Queen!

This, of course, with bell-ringing, before and after the command.

There was a class for fox-hounds at that show, and some few reasonably good hounds were shown. "Bobby" Dowson, who is still remembered as a Whip of that old-world pack, the Bilsdale, had brought a great, throaty, mealy-pied hound from those kennels, and he had a biscuit in his pocket with which to make the heavy-jowled beast show himself. The judges at once relegated him to a corner as having no chance, but the little old man thought he was first choice, and kept holding up a piece of biscuit for his hound, and saying: "Nowt can ekal this dog! Nowt can ekal him!"

So engrossed was he in admiration of his exhibit that the prizes and other honours were given and the rest of the class had left the ring before he became aware that he had got nothing.

I ought not to have omitted to say that I became a member of Sandown Park in 1875, and Blackwood and I were at the well-remembered meeting when Goldfinder, ridden by E. P. Wilson, won the Grand International Steeplechase of 30 sovereigns each, with 1200 sovereigns added, on 24th April 1875. The distance was four miles, and there were twenty runners. Goldfinder won by six lengths, and I remember Lord Marcus Beresford's Chimney Sweep was either placed or fourth. The fences then were tremendous.

It should never be forgotten that Sandown Park proved to be the salvation of racing in the neighbourhood of London, for the old suburban fixtures had become so scandalous as to be practically unendurable. Sandown Park initiated the enclosed meetings, and from that time forth all has been well, except that such race-courses have been specially seized on during the war by the military authorities, though ample land was available outside them, and immense damage has been done to the interests of racing and, by consequence, of horse-breeding. There is no conceivable reason why Esher Common should not

have been utilised by the military authorities, instead of Sandown Park: but the Nonconformist conscience regards with deadly hostility an enterprise which, from the first, guaranteed the respectability of racing. Thus it happened that Sandown Park was victimised under the falsely assumed pretext of war necessity.

CHAPTER XXII

Cobham Stud Booming—Kisber's Derby—Divinity Examination—Jester II. at Limmers' Hotel—His Type changed—A true Fox-terrier—The Beginnings of Sandown Park—Lord Charles Ker—Sir Wilford Brett—The Vivandières—Sale of Maximilian at Cobham—Hume Webster comes in—Something about him—My Wedding—Pipers made me forget my Money—I go away without it—Sandown Park Manager to the Rescue—Hats off for Craig Millar's Doncaster Cup—New Year's Eve and Punch—Morning and the Bar Examination—Called to the Bar nevertheless

I AM fearful of dwelling too long on this crowded period of my life, but cannot omit to mention the Blair Athol triumph with Craig Millar, who won the 1875 St Leger. He was a chestnut horse of peculiarly Oriental type, very much like Cicero—indeed, just such another—only Craig Millar used to gallop with his head extended almost to a straight line with his neck. He was a very fine stayer, as was proved to demonstration at Doncaster the following year.

Blair Athol headed the list of winning stallions for 1875, and Macaroni was second. No wonder that the Cobham Stud seemed to be well on the up line. Ten per cent. dividend had been paid each year, and why should not even that be increased? True, there were Mr John Coupland's debentures to redeem after the third year, but what matter?

I saw Kisber win the Derby of 1876. I was in one of the boxes, and under agreeable conditions. I was not then engaged to be married, but progressing that way. In the same circumstances, I saw Camelia and Enguerrande run their dead heat for the Oaks: but before that time—it was in the winter months and the floods were out—I had been advised—I will not say commanded—by the

lady who later did me the honour to become my wife to go and pass my Divinity examination at Oxford. I did this thing, even though it involved driving in a pig-cart from Abingdon along the flooded road, and I did not even possess a Greek Testament at the time, but that did not worry me, for the Bible has always been my standard work. So the examination was passed as a matter of course, though, as mentioned already, I did not trouble to take my degree until twenty years later. What fools we mortals be!

I suppose it is only natural that I should dwell—it may be too long—on this particular year, 1876, with its various see-saw mechanism as between Kisber and Petrarch, and its much more important happening, as far as I was concerned: but I must, at any rate, make some mention of the Cobham sale, and also of the fact that, having finished my year with Mr Butterworth, the Special Pleader, I was doing six months in the chambers of Mr Charles Davidson, the famous conveyancer, who, however, was then an old man and wrote me twelve years later, on 16th November 1888:

> I am satisfied that you were in my chambers as a pupil for six months, in or about 1876, but the interval which has elapsed precludes me from being able to give any definite statement as to your capacity or knowledge of law.
>
> CHARLES DAVIDSON.

Quite so, and all honour to the old gentleman for not testifying to what he did not remember; but to have been six months in Davidson's chambers—unless you were quite a fool—was an ample credential that you must have had considerable knowledge of the law—as it then was.

But all this time I have been missing events of some importance, one of which was that in December, 1875, I won first prize at the Alexandra Palace, with Jester II., the best fox-terrier I ever owned. He was by old Jester out of a pure kennel-terrier bitch, bred by Ben Morgan and belonging to Lord Middleton's kennels. He was given

as a puppy to Noah Hook, one of Sir George Wombwell's keepers, and I bought the young dog from him at a little over six months old, still undocked, and the docking of him at that age was no easy job. Here let me advise all whom it may concern that it is of the essence of correct dealing with a fox-terrier pup to always leave him an amply sufficient length of stern, so that there may be no lack of something to lay hold of in tailing him out of a fox-earth. There has been a dreadful tendency, among the modern generation of breeders and judges, to forget this very important point.

Jester II. was a good long time before his docking in "riper years" proved as satisfactory as if it had been done when he was a nine or ten days' old puppy, for at that age it is very easy to take off sufficient of the tail between the fore-fingers and thumbs, and the operation is almost painless; but he grew out into a real champion, and was as game a dog as ever lived. He had a coat on him of the texture of pig's bristles, long and lying flat like the hackles on a duck's back, and quite as difficult to turn up the wrong way. It was a coat that was almost impervious to cold, and he would swim about, hunting rats in the Codbeck, when there was a "fresh" on, in the depth of winter, as long as you would allow him, without ever a shiver when he came out on the bank. That was a terrier indeed, and when he won at the Alexandra Palace the £10 first prize—a big prize for a dog show—*The Field*, of 25th December 1875, said: "Thirty-three competed and formed one of the best dog classes in the show. Mr Allison's Jester II. here had his merits recognised, being placed first, though unnoticed at Birmingham."

The point of this story is, however, that as Jester II. was a thoroughly nice, companionable dog, I took him home from the show to 24 St James's Place for the night, having deposited a sovereign at the show, according to rule, as bail for his return in the morning. That night I was engaged to dine with the late David Hope Johnstone at Limmers', and I took the dog with me for I knew that

a sight of him would interest my host, as it certainly did. We dined cheerily and well, and continued sitting in the coffee-room to about 11.30 P.M., when there came in Cyril Flower and another man, with a common beast of a bull-terrier weighing about 25 lb., and not worth 30s. Almost in a moment the two dogs started fighting, and those present—saving myself—were delighted by such a novelty in such a place. Their enthusiasm was so great that I was obliged to sit and suffer, or labour under the imputation that I doubted the gameness of my dog. I was certainly on "a good hiding to nothing"—as the saying is—and the big brute was, so far, too heavy. He got a hold of my dog somewhere near one of his eyes and held on as if he would never let go, but Jester II. was the more active, and very hard-bitten too.

Fortunately the big dog was fat, and as mine was in show condition, they had fought themselves to an absolute standstill in fifteen minutes, and a bowl of water being brought, they both lapped out of it and settled down like gentlemen with mutual appreciation.

I got my dog away home as soon as I could, and found him badly cut about the head. I fomented him as best I could, and he slept peacefully on my bed, but next morning he had a head like a football.

Nevertheless, I had, of course, to take him back to the show, and did so. The result was strangely amusing, for as I stood by and heard the comments of the public on the first-prize winner I felt that the fight had not been fought in vain.

The common remark of the average critic was: "Dear me! and that is the winning dog! How much the type has changed!" Such comments were really precious to me, who knew so truly how the "type" had been changed in this instance.

Poor Jester II.! he was a wonder indeed, as fox-terriers go, and I have not seen a single modern one with a coat like his. John Doyle wrote to offer me £60 for him the following year, and I might have accepted it,

but a man arrived from Bradford and offered £80, so he got the dog. Later on this man refused £150 for him—so there were decent prices, even in those days.

I ought not, I suppose, to have cast back—and least of all into a dog story—but as I have, in fact, got back into 1875, I may as well tell the story of the starting of Sandown Park as it was told to me by one who knew.

Lord Charles Ker and the late Mr Millward first conceived the idea of securing the land and making it into an enclosed race-course. Neither was an affluent man, but both had plenty of assurance, and having interviewed the solicitor who had the property to sell, they closed with his offer at a certain price, and paid a deposit in the shape of a promissory note for £1500. The bargain was such a good one that they succeeded in mortgaging the land for £4000 more than the purchase money, and thus they had a margin of working capital after completing the purchase. It was a very clever and entirely correct business transaction so far as it went, but how far it would have gone, had not the late General Owen Williams and Mr Hwfa Willams come to the rescue, it is needless at this period to speculate.

Lord Charles Ker was always one of the cheeriest and most undefeated sportsmen that ever breathed, but he never was nor ever could be a financier or skilled business man. All honour to him, at the same time, for having, so to speak, invented Sandown Park, which grew into a far-reaching success, not only in itself, but by reason of other successful enclosed courses which followed on the same lines. I have not seen Lord Charles Ker for some years, but I am sure he deserves a testimonial. He used to think, indeed, for a good many years that he still owned Sandown Park and had been wrongfully dispossessed of it. That was a mistake on his part, but there is no mistake about the initiative of this brilliant success having been his. He also was responsible for the big Aintree type of fences which were at first built up at Sandown.

Sir Wilford Brett, brother of Sir Baliol Brett (after-

wards Lord Esher), lived at Esher and soon became actively concerned in Sandown Park, where his administrative experience enabled him to render invaluable service, and it was he who later on arranged for the card selling by Vivandières, which used to be a pleasant novelty. Sergeant Walker was ground manager from the first and the general manager was Mr Whitaker Bushe, between whom and "Pavo" of *The Morning Post* there was a deadly feud.

I do not profess to know the inner workings of Sandown Park since its early stages, but it certainly went on from strength to strength, and it is a thousand pities that the military authorities should have injured it and other race-courses so needlessly.

After this brief retrogression I must get forward to the Cobham sale of 17th June 1876, which totalled 14,170 guineas for the Company's forty-one yearlings. The colt by Blair Athol out of Vergiss-mein-Nicht, who had been such a grand foal, was equally attractive as a yearling. He was bought by Mr Gerard (afterwards Lord Gerard), for 2300 guineas, and, being a January foal, he was a rare sort for a June sale, but he did not grow, and when I saw him at Newmarket the next season he seemed very little bigger than at the sale. He was named Lord Lovell, and being a brother to Lady Love, should have raced, but he proved useless. The Blair Athol-Jocosa colt had died of pneumonia the year before, and though his close relative out of Madame Eglentine had survived, his sides were denuded of hair, as a result of blistering. Charles Blanton gave 1150 guineas for him at the sale. The name, Centenary, was given him and he won many races. Among other good winners disposed of at that sale was Strathfleet, by Scottish Chief, out of Masquerade, who was bought by Major Barlow for the Duke of Westminster for 1050 guineas. Altogether, things were going very well for the Stud Company, and after our last lot had been knocked down for 210 guineas to Mr G. E. Paget—she proved to be Empress of India—I went to the luncheon tent to

Sir Wilford Brett
and
The Sandown Park Vivandières

speed certain parting guests who wanted to get away sharp.

While we were there someone came in, who said a yearling had just been sold for 4100 guineas. His words seemed to us as an idle tale. Six yearlings, the property of Mr R. H. Combe, were to come up after the Company's, but there was nothing sensational among them—at least so we thought. Very soon, however, the story was confirmed. The colt by Macaroni out of Duchess had indeed realised 4100 guineas, Robert Peck and Sir Robert Jardine having opposed one another with astounding pertinacity, until the former's bid of an extra 100 guineas after the 4000 guineas proved successful. This was for many years the record auction price for a yearling. Peck was lucky in finding the Duke of Westminster ready to take the colt (Maximilian) off his hands, for he turned out a very disappointing horse. He ran once only as a two-year-old, unplaced; and did not start at three years.

As a four-year-old, however, he ran nine times and won four, his best performance being when he carried 7 stone 7 lb. for the Liverpool July Cup, and won by a neck from the favourite, Glendale, 7 stone 12 lb., New Laund and eight others. He cannot therefore be regarded as having been an utter failure, after the manner of many other high-priced ones. Robert Peck made a better purchase, however, for 1000 guineas that same afternoon, when he secured—also out of Mr Combe's lots—the colt by Lord Clifden out of Weatherside. This was the Reefer, who won the Chester Cup in 1879, and a good many other races.

The above will serve to give some impression of how the Stud Company Limited was flourishing in those far-off days. I had increased my holding in it and had made the acquaintance of Mr Hume Webster, the managing director of the Credit Company, who was arranging an advance to the Company for the purpose of paying off Mr Coupland's £25,000 debentures, then about to fall due. This was done all right on the basis of another debenture issue, which

ultimately increased to £40,000 at 10 per cent., with 2½ per cent. commission to Mr Webster for arranging the business. He was a man of whom, adopting the maxim, *De mortuis nil nisi bonum*, I can truly say that he was gifted with extraordinary abilities.

He joined the Board of the Stud Company to protect the financial interests of the Credit Company, and at that time he was absolutely ignorant on the subject of horses in general and bloodstock in particular.

He mastered the subject in its business details within a few weeks, and very soon he had also grasped what the Continental and Colonial demand was for the British thoroughbred. All this he was destined to exploit within two or three years for his own advantage at Marden Deer Park. He had a private financial business in Abchurch Lane, with the late Captain Noel Hoare, R.N., as partner. The Credit Company was located within easy distance, and one of the Guinness family was its chief capitalist.

Such, then, was the position, and I got married on 30th August 1876, before I had even passed my Bar examination. No man is a hero at his own wedding—indeed he is but a necessary encumbrance—and it is not my intention to give any account of that function save that an uncle of my wife, the late Colonel Arthur Campbell-Walker, brought down some pipers of a Highland regiment, who piped so distractingly that in changing my wedding garments for going-away rig, I forgot to transfer my note-case, and, as a result, found, before we had driven 200 yards, that I had but a few shillings in my pocket.

It was, of course, impossible to turn back, and as we were only driving from a distance of 15 miles to a London hotel it did not much matter. I telegraphed from the first available office, asking for my note-case to be forwarded, and it was brought to London for me by a Sandown Park official who happened to be on his way to town. I have always liked Sandown Park, and that incident

linked it intimately with me, insomuch as this emissary proved a friend in need at such a time.

I will say no more than that in marrying I did the one thing of my life which has never been touched by the slightest shadow of regret. That is mere truth, and not to be dilated on here.

We went to Kilvington in time for the St Leger week, and Tom Scott and I, as a matter of course, saw Petrarch win the St Leger—it was his turn that time. There must have been something the matter with Kisber, who started a hot favourite, but that year's classic results were such that it is idle to attempt any explanation of them at this date. Petrarch was a beautiful, blood-like bay colt, rather short in his back ribs and light of loin, but it can hardly admit of doubt that the much more sturdy and robust Kisber was the better animal. So let it rest.

The Friday at Doncaster sent us back overjoyed to Kilvington, for Craig Millar won the Cup, 2 miles 5 furlongs, very easily, by 2 lengths, with Controversy second, and Hampton (who started favourite) and Charon unplaced. That is the only occasion during a long life on which I have thrown up my hat, but I did it then, and had much difficulty in recovering it in a battered condition. People had been so aggravating on the subject of Blair Athol's stock not staying that this triumph was joy indeed.

Moreover, the race before the Cup had been won by Twine the Plaiden (daughter of Blair Athol and Old Orange Girl) by ten lengths, and they brought her out again for the race after the Cup, the Park Hill Stakes, over the Leger course. This too she won running away. I can feel the exaltation of those three Blair Athol triumphs even now as I write.

We went off home there and then, with the conviction that for us the Race-course had accomplished its best possible. Whether we were reprimanded or not on our return is buried in oblivion; what does blaze out in the light of memory is that we were very happy. Blair Athol

was indeed a fitting object of hero-worship. No horse has ever attained to his position in that respect.

I remained in the north for shooting and hunting until near Christmas, and then went south. My examination for the Bar was to begin on 1st January 1877, and I had not given it a thought. Christmas came, and New Year's Eve. We were at Kingston and my father-in-law, as a Scotsman, had assembled friends to see the old year out in orthodox style. Punch was brewed, without my redeeming ingredient of syrup of ginger. I saw the New Year in with adequate festivity, and retired to rest about 2 A.M., with the horrible knowledge that I had to make a fifteen-mile railway journey and must be in the Hall at Lincoln's Inn by 10 A.M.

It would have been far better not to go to bed, for when I was called at 7 A.M. I felt as Solomon clearly did when he wrote, in regard to his overnight condition after celebrations: "When shall I arise?"

Yet it was necessary to "arise." Breakfast was out of the question, and hastily picking up a book containing a synopsis of "Leading Cases," I hurried off to the railway station and so, in due course and time, to the Hall of Lincoln's Inn! Bitterly did I regret the lack of syrup of ginger in that punch, for it was at least ten minutes before I could even read the paper before me. Then came a few minutes of deadly fear that I was actually going to fail to deal with the questions.

Such a thought drove away the demons of discomfort, and having made a start I was soon scribbling away all right, for the paper was really a simple one.

The later papers were subject to no such handicap as that awful first one, and there was no difficulty so far as they were concerned, but the first called for the most ruthless determination before I could force my faculties into tackling it. All ended well; but I shall always think it positively inhuman on the part of the legal authorities to fix such examinations for 10 A.M. on the morning of 1st January, before our old year follies have

evaporated or our new year's resolutions have had time to get a move on.

Be that as it may, the ordeal, in my case, was successfully gone through, and on 25th April 1877 I was called to the Bar.

CHAPTER XXIII

Northallerton Sessions—"Skiddy"—Judging Terriers at the Crystal Palace—Tom Fitzwilliam—Curiosities of the N.E. Circuit—Samuel Danks Waddy—Mathew Dawson and Lord Falmouth at Newmarket—Silvio's Great Trial—Glorious Year for Blair Athol—Cobham Stud *in excelsis*—Buying Mares from John Porter—Lured to Leeds—Left at Leeds—Cobham neglected—Money Losses—Trouble brewing—Ten per Cent. Dividend but no Money—Russo-Turkish War—Disraeli—Position of the Stud Company Ltd.

NOW I was not without a good reason for going to the Bar, inasmuch as Mr Arrowsmith was still flourishing and the old office in Thirsk was that of Arrowsmith & Richardson. They did a big business, and the briefs at Northallerton Quarter Sessions came as a matter almost of course to me, and there was also at Assizes all the work that could be given to an extreme junior. I delighted in Northallerton Quarter Sessions. The leader of the Bar there was Skidmore—"Skiddy," as he used to be called—and he was a wonder for tickling the ears of country juries.

I have heard a jury interpose when Skidmore was defending a man against whom no case was made out, and the judge was about to direct them to declare him not guilty, and the foreman said: "We should like to hear Mr Skidmore, my Lord!"

This was at York Assizes and the judge allowed them to hear the speech in defence, though there was absolutely no necessity for it. The jury would not on any account have missed that treat if they could possibly have avoided doing so. Sutherst, who was heard much of in legal proceedings of later years, was also a Northallerton Sessions man, and there were many others.

We had a splendid cellar of port at the old hotel, which

had been kept going for generations. When I used to go, there was a great deal more of 1847 vintage than could be consumed, in the ordinary way, and the corks were getting a little doubtful. Much of it was turned over to wine merchants for wines of later vintages, and thus the cellar was kept in proper order for the future as well as for the then present.

I am not sure whether it was in my first year at the Bar or the second—and it does not matter which—that I had a curious experience of work at Northallerton. I had to judge fox-terriers at the Crystal Palace, with the Hon. Tom Fitzwilliam as a colleague, and I had to be at Northallerton for the Sessions the following morning. That may not seem a very difficult job, but the classes to be judged were big ones—very different from what they are nówadays—and it took us from about 11 A.M. to 4 P.M. to finish them. No judge whom I ever met was so completely at one with me as he was, and there was no difficulty on that score. Still, the task was a tiring one, and when I got back to town there was only just time to dine hastily and get away by the night train. Most people could have slept peacefully, but not so I. I had been strung up by that judging and sleep would have been quite out of the question. I had a catalogue and kept worrying over it and wondering whether all our awards had been right.

The train arrived at York at 2 A.M. and there was an interval of four hours before there was one which would stop at Northallerton. Again the idea of sleep was out of the question, and as I had four briefs I went into the Station Hotel to read them. This was better than reading the catalogue, and in the run between York and Northallerton the time passed quite easily. I arrived there in plenty of time to get into shape for breakfast with the others, and then we went into court.

I did my work in the way of prosecuting sundry alleged criminals, and if the afternoon brought on a feeling of drowsiness, it was only because the proceedings were devoid of interest. That evening after dinner I sat with

others until 2 A.M. the next morning without the remotest inclination to sleep, then had a few hours in bed, and was in court at 10 A.M.—again did my work, and got away to town by an afternoon train and arrived there without the slightest feeling that I had done more or slept less than usual. This was, of course, a very trifling experience, but it served to prove to me that all the talk about so many hours of sleep being essential to well-being is nonsense, if only you are engaged in work of real interest or importance. It is infinitely worse to sleep too much than to sleep too little, and the siesta is a deadly habit, no matter what climate you are in.

I went on the North Eastern Circuit, and it was a good time indeed. Frank Lockwood was at that period only just becoming a leading light, and the late Judges Cave and Lawrence were among the leaders of the Circuit. Samuel Danks Waddy was notable, and Meysey-Thompson was "the junior" of the Circuit. Very clever was he, even for a junior, who is expected always to be witty in the exercise of his office. I suppose I ought not even now to go into details of the ceremonials of a court after dinner to which certain offenders are from time to time summoned, but I cannot forbear quoting Meysey-Thompson's summons to Lawrence Gane, a Leeds barrister, whose clerk was a champion for securing briefs :

> Lawrence Gane, come into the Court!
> Lawrence Gane, come into the Court!
> Greedy, guinea-getting, ill-gotten Gane,
> Come into the Court!

There was, of course, on these occasions permitted licence of speech, and no offence could be taken at what was said by anybody, least of all by "the junior," but I have always thought that the descriptive line given above was worthy of any of the most famous wits in the day when wit was considered essential to a man of fashion.

Then there was a song in which came the line :

> And Waddy has a *method* of succeeding at the Bar.

The allusion was to the habit of preaching in Nonconformist pulpits, which Samuel Danks cultivated with much success, though far be it from me to suggest here that he was influenced by any but the most conscientious motives.

Stuart Wortley was on the North Eastern Circuit with me, so that we were still mixed up together, though it was not to be for very long.

It was in the spring of 1877 that I first made the personal acquaintance of Mathew Dawson and Lord Falmouth. It was a year big with fate for the Cobham stud, for there were many Blair Athol three-year-olds of great pretensions, Rob Roy in particular, whose purchase at Cobham has been already referred to. Mr Bell, the Cobham manager, and I went to Newmarket a week or so before the racing season opened, and we stayed at the Rutland Arms. After dining there we spent the evening with Mathew Dawson at Heath House, and a very delightful evening it was. Mathew Dawson was a really great man, who would have risen to the top of the tree in any walk of life, and to hear him talk on the subject of horses and racing was in its way a liberal education. It was a convivial evening too, for, like every reasonable Scotsman, he appreciated good whisky. Moreover, as regards Blair Athol, he told us how the great horse's son, Silvio, had been tried that very morning. They had set him a big task—*i.e.* to beat the four-year-old Skylark over a mile at a difference of only 6 lb. in favour of Silvio, who had won so easily that he was certainly the equal of the old one at even weights.

This was manifestly a great trial, for the weight for age difference between a three-year-old and a four-year-old in March is 20 lb., and Skylark had been one of the best of the preceding season, nor had he failed to improve, for he won the Gold Vase at Ascot later on in 1877. Before the evening had finished we had begun to think that the Derby was as good as over, and when we left for the Rutland Arms both my companion and I were so regardless of anything else except the coming triumphs of Blair

Athol that we walked into the ditch instead of through the gate which opens on to the grass near the Bury road. However, that did not matter, and we were out betimes next morning to see Silvio, who with the rest of the Heath House string was walking round not far from the Cesarewitch stand. Lord Falmouth was there, and he was good enough to also tell us how Silvio had been tried, for he was as great a believer in Blair Athol as we were, and was glad to impart such good news. He agreed that the trial was very high, "but," added he, "I question whether it is good enough to beat Chamant."

Silvio was a bay colt of medium size and perfect quality. He was of a type such as Blair Athol several times sired out of Kingston mares, the "nick" no doubt coming through Queen Mary, for Partisan was her grandsire as also he was Kingston's. Silverhair, the dam of Silvio, had been several times mated with Blair Athol, the first produce being Silver Ring, a beautiful and very good filly, of the same type as Silvio. The second was Garterly Bell, a bigger and more heavily framed colt, but quite a good one until his wind became affected. Then came Silvio and, after him, Lohengrin, who was a two-year-old when we stood there looking at the string. Lohengrin was a big chestnut colt and a typical Blair Athol. Referring to the great difference between him and Silvio, Lord Falmouth said, merely in jest, to the Cobham manager: "You must have made a mistake, I think, about that one," pointing to Silvio, "and put the mare to Macaroni."

Somehow this remark, which had no touch of serious meaning, got repeated, and people ultimately ascribed to it an altogether unintended significance. As Lord Falmouth used always to send a man of his own with such of his mares as visited Blair Athol, he could not for a moment have really entertained any such idea, and those who imagined there was anything in it were undeceived later on when many of Silvio's stock showed distinct Blair Athol characteristics.

There were two very grand two-year-old fillies by Blair

Athol among the lot under notice. One was Redwing, a big bay or brown, out of Wheatear (dam of Skylark), and the other was a still bigger chestnut, Lady of Mercia, out of Lady Coventry, whose three-year-old bay daughter, Lady Golightly, was also on view. Of Lady of Mercia Lord Falmouth had very high hopes indeed, but they did not materialise. Her name appears, however, in not a few good French pedigrees. Redwing, on the other hand, was a success, and won the Coronation Stakes of 1878. Skylark was there, and he was a rare stamp of horse, strong as a castle and very wide to follow. His hocks were not quite what they should be, but they never failed him, and he has his name in the stud book for many a day to come as the sire of Warble, dam of Wargrave and grandam of Spearmint.

In the course of that morning at Newmarket we went and saw Rob Roy, at Blanton's, and nothing could have been looking better than the blaze-faced chestnut son of Blair Athol and Columba ; but we returned home full of Silvio and his trial, so that all our friends were on him for the Derby.

And then an evil thing happened, for Silvio ran for the Newmarket Biennial at the Craven Meeting and was unplaced. It was explained that he would not face the rainstorm ; but when it came to the Two Thousand Guineas he finished only third to Chamant and Brown Prince. There was no particular excuse for him that time, and the great tip began to seem an odiously bad one. Altyre, a Cobham-bred Blair Athol, had meanwhile come to the fore by winning two races easily in one afternoon at Newmarket. He was now greatly fancied for the Derby, though as a two-year-old he had seemed so moderate that Mr Beddington half decided to convert him into a park hack.

Derby day arrived and there were no fewer than five Blair Athols in the field, Silvio, Rob Roy, Altyre, Orleans and Covenanter, all of which, except Silvio, had been sold as yearlings at Cobham.

I will not dwell on the race, for which Rob Roy was favourite, and looked a perfect picture, with Custance up in brand-new Tartan colours. Nay more, he would almost certainly have won—and Robert Peck was of this opinion, too—had he not run out very wide indeed at Tattenham Corner. As it was, Silvio won cleverly from Glen Arthur, with Rob Roy third and Altyre close up. It was a great day indeed, and the Cobham yearlings on the Ascot Saturday, Silvio having won the Prince of Wales' Stakes meanwhile, with the full penalty, made 20,610 guineas.

Is it to be wondered at that I thought more and more of the Stud Company, and even bought some mares of my own, four or five of which were very good purchases from John Porter, on the occasion of my first visit to Kingsclere? One of these was Scotch Reel (1874), by Scottish Chief, out of Masquerade, in foal to Dutch Skater; another was Sweet Marjoram (1870), by Adventurer, out of Lady Flora by Stockwell, with a filly by Scottish Chief, and in foal to Carnival, whom we had brought back from the Continent to Cobham the year before; and another was La Neva (1866), by Monarque, out of Etoile du Nord by the Baron, with a filly by Musket and covered by King of the Forest. I also bought several at the break up of the Dewhurst stud that year, and beautifully bred ones they were, such as Lady Ravensworth (1865), by Voltigeur, out of Lady Hawthorn, with a colt by King of the Forest and covered by Scottish Chief; Lavinia (1863), by The Cure, out of Lady Louisa by Touchstone, with a colt by The Palmer and covered by Scottish Chief; and others which it is needless to mention.

I have a horror of being prolix over this well-remembered time, so will dash on to narrate how we went to Scarborough that August and September. Scarborough was then a very different place from what it is now, and that was a very great season, uninvaded by masses of trippers as in these later days. It was at Scarborough that I met an old friend of my father-in-law. His name was Curwood and he was the Town Clerk of Leeds. As soon as he knew

that I had been but recently called to the Bar he said: "Come and localise at Leeds, and I'll make your fortune!"

The idea of localising at Leeds was, I confess, hateful to me, but having given hostages to fortune in getting married and so forth, I felt I ought not to study my own inclinations, and so we decided to embark on this, to me, unattractive venture. Mr Curwood was as good as his word, for at the very outset he invited me to a dinner at his house where I met fully a dozen solicitors, to all of whom he spoke about me in painfully eulogistic terms, and before I had been at Leeds a fortnight I was fairly overwhelmed with work, much of which was for the municipal authorities.

It is easy to understand that as there were counsel in Leeds who had been established there for as much as twenty years my meteoric appearance was not viewed favourably, and one of my first cases was to defend some of the town police who had acted quite indefensibly, by searching someone's house for stolen property when they had not a search warrant.

Elder counsel sat in court with ill-concealed satisfaction at my abortive efforts to defend these men. There had been very good reason to suspect that the stolen property was where they searched, but it was not, and to have stated the grounds for suspicion would have been merely to add insult to injury. However, I did the best I could, and I am very sure none of the others in court could have exculpated those policemen. It was easy to see that I was going to get myself disliked, but I was prepared to worry through all that, for the Town Clerk was a tower of strength and I had full confidence in myself; but there came a bolt from the blue at the end of my first fortnight, when my friend was offered the solicitorship of the Great Eastern Railway and accepted it. Thereupon he departed from Leeds, leaving me, who had gone up like a rocket, to an entirely false position, to descend—if not quite like a stick, but still to descend.

In a few months' time I had shaken down to a more

reasonable position and had found good friends, such as the late George Bankes, Charles Mellor, Tindal Atkinson and others of the local division. Leeds Borough Sessions, West Riding Sessions and various odds and ends of practice, besides Northallerton Sessions and the North Eastern Circuit, kept me fairly busy, and I had a brass plate with my name on it outside somewhat pretentious chambers, and a very small clerk named Pickles. Why it should have been orthodox to have a brass plate at Leeds while such a thing would be unimaginable in London, I know not, but I have the brass plate somewhere or other to this day.

But before all this had happened, and indeed before the end of the Scarborough visit, I had, of course, been to Doncaster to see Silvio win the St Leger. Never do I remember a horse striking off into more perfect action than he did as he commenced his canter past the stands to the start. I had seen his stable companion, Lady Golightly, win the Great Yorkshire Stakes at York August Meeting, but never doubted which would win the Leger. I had £10 on Silvio—and I have never backed a horse for more. It is a matter of history, of course, that he won easily from Lady Golightly.

Thus the "boom" at Cobham was continued. Blair Athol headed the list of winning stallions that year by more than 10,000 sovereigns, and we raised his fee to 200 guineas, which turned out to be a fatal policy.

The fly in the ointment, so far as I was concerned, at Leeds was that I could not pay visits to Cobham, though it was possible to attend occasional Board meetings by an early express to town, and return the same evening. Somehow, despite the magnificent superficial show of the stud, I began to feel that all was not well. Moreover, our best friends among breeders, such as Lord Falmouth and Mr Stirling Crawford, resolutely refused to pay more than 100 guineas fee, even for Blair Athol.

Personally I had involved myself in various financial transactions, one of which concerned a patent for turning

flax or cotton into silk or its equivalent by an electro-veneering process. The patentee was a Frenchman named Magner, and I have never been quite satisfied that he did not believe in his invention, but I know I dropped a lot of money and nothing came of it. Then, too, I had heard Mr Goschen speak on his return from Egypt, after doing what he could to arrange finance there, and I conceived the idea that Egyptian Unified should be bought, so I speculated in 10,000 of them and they had such a fall that I lost £1500 in two accounts. Still, I did not mind, for I had paid for them down to twenty-eight and regarded it as merely an instalment towards taking them up, but alas!—I being then away from London—there came word that the brokers with whom I dealt had been "hammered" and the stock sold out against them. Before I knew this Unifieds had risen seven, and they kept on rising from that time forth. These things, however, were but the outer fringe of money troubles which the city of London involved me in, and as I can't exactly blame myself, and certainly will not blame anyone else, the easiest plan is to give the subject a miss, with the simple intimation that troubles were brewing. Yet I had full faith in Cobham to make good any other deficiencies, and in 1878 the yearlings sold for no less than 22,070 guineas. That surely was encouraging; but I was out of touch with the show, being exiled at Leeds, and there had been a decimating attack of joint evil among the foals that year—it was called "foal disease" at that time. Veterinary science was so little advanced then that the very necessary precaution of disinfecting the navels of new-born foals was not practised, and of course the disease flew round like wildfire. How many foals died I cannot say, but I know that practically all of mine did, the mares being then at Cobham.

Moreover, in the fifth year of the Company's operations, though the accounts as passed by the auditors showed justification for another 10 per cent. dividend, which was accordingly declared, the money with which to pay

it was not at the bank, but only in the problematical value of mares and stallions.

I have never yet come upon a scheme by which accounts of a stud farm could be kept with any pretence of certainty, for there is no sort of standard value by which any of the animals can be assessed. What you have given 1000 guineas for may depreciate to 50 guineas, and a 50-guinea purchase may become worth 5000 guineas. These considerations are still more confusing if you enter such animals in the books at cost price, for the animal bought for 50 and worth 5000 guineas will have eaten its head off in the first year and be counted as valueless.

The above is a dry subject, and at the time I am dealing with there were events in progress of absorbing interest. The Russo-Turkish War had been concluded by the Treaty of Berlin on 16th July 1878, and Lord Salisbury and Disraeli had returned to England in a blaze of triumph. In 1877 there had been the ever-to-be-remembered defence of Plevna from July to November, and in the earlier half of 1878 the Indian troops had been brought to Malta. Disraeli then was at the zenith of his power, and it is sad that his opportunity should have come so late in life, for he it was who first raised the British Empire to conscious knowledge of its corporate existence, and in that one brief motto of *Imperium et Libertas* he epitomised the whole code under which the sisterhood of free nations can co-operate for the good of all.

I had never ceased to be mixed up with politics in so far as they could be made to serve the cause of Tory Democracy as so beautifully developed in Disraeli's books, especially in *Sybil*, and I think Tory Democracy has, from the first, meant "All for England—all for the British Empire."

As to the Treaty of Berlin, Lord Salisbury, no doubt, thought in later years that they had "backed the wrong horse," in Turkey, but it was only after the real Turkey had been bought and sold to the Germans, under the sickening sham of developing Liberal ideas in a country

which Abdul Hamid had alone known how to rule. What the Liberal ideas of the Young Turks were we now know —liberality to themselves and a fig for their country's welfare. The would-be promoters of Liberal phantasies among Oriental peoples are like missionaries who endeavour to convert the Chinese—only the missionaries do no serious harm, whereas the visionaries who hailed the setting up of Enver Pasha as a triumph for Western civilisation strengthened Germany and damaged the whole world.

Disraeli was absolutely right in 1878 to stand by the Turk, as the Turk then was. What the Russian is we now know, what the German is almost passes the bounds of imagination.

The Bulgarians are hardly superior to their late allies in human qualities. The old Turk may have been no saint, but at least he was vastly better than any of the ruffians just mentioned, and as I write this I remember a pantomime at Leeds in which kings and queens of England were introduced in procession. Last came Queen Victoria, a chubby little girl, who sang the refrain of MacDermott's then popular war song, with splendid effect—striking one small hand on the other vigorously over the prohibitory line :

The Russians shan't have Constantinople.

Yes, it was all fixed up for the best at that time, for Russia has been a world danger for many a year, and Germany ever since 1870. Turkey was roped into this war by Enver and his German associates. No genuine Turk has any animosity towards England.

I am writing, as it seems, in an atmosphere of past and present, but I remember those old days so well and how the bogus agitation about Bulgarian atrocities was conducted in the Midlothian Campaign, and I would fain say a word for the poor, coerced Turk, in whatever the forthcoming settlement of Europe may be.

Joseph Griffiths had left Cobham in 1878 and gone as stud groom to Lord Rosebery. We then secured Bowman, who had been for fifteen years stud groom to Lord Falmouth—a sufficient credential in all conscience—and I, who had begun for the first time in my life to understand that money is a serious item, bestirred myself even in Leeds to effect economies in the Stud Company's expenses. The so-called foal disease had enormously diminished the probable return for the following year. Blair Athol at 200 guineas had not got anything like a full subscription list, and the last declared dividend had not been paid. We were six directors at £200 a year each; secretary and office, £300 a year; manager (then at the bigger house, Cobham Lodge), £1000 a year; rent of manager's house, £300, and purchase of furniture (from memory) £1700. Then there was the debenture debt of £40,000 at 10 per cent., with 2½ commission to Hume Webster, which last charge alone meant paying £5000 a year before the shareholders could get anything. What a splendid property the stud really was may be clearly shown from the way in which it had supported this burden, and still to all outward semblance was going strong.

CHAPTER XXIV

A General Meeting of the Stud Company Ltd.—My Effort to save the Company—Frustrated—Disastrous Change of Auctioneer—Liquidation—Final Sale—All Debts paid—Shareholders get Nothing—Work at the Bar—The Thirsk Election Petition—How I was instructed—The Teetotal Witness and the "Old Jamaica"—Evidence of Tom Palliser—His Wrath against Mr Justice Denman—"A singularly pure Election"—Origin of the Fox-terrier Club—Judging at Nottingham—Difficulties Accumulate

NOT unnaturally there was an angry General Meeting of shareholders of the Stud Company Ltd. Edward Beall, a solicitor, whose various vicissitudes may be still remembered, had been supplied with a share by someone who wished to cause trouble, and, of course, he sent a circular to the shareholders with forms of proxy inviting them to assist in an attack on the directors. However, Sir Charles Legard was a capable chairman, and we easily held our own. I remember writing some stuff for *The Sporting Times* on the subject of that meeting. It was in the form of operatic libretto, and one of our assailants was supposed to sing a solo, some words of which I still remember:

Whereas this base Directing crew
Exist at our expense;
And, though incompetent, they do
Obtain a Competence;
We censure them for want of sense,
And, with our votes' dread might,
To right-about direct them hence
For not Directing right.

Evidently the opposition was of a trifling character, or I should not have written about the meeting in that

style. But the trouble was none the less very serious, and I had by this time realised it as none of the other directors or the manager appeared to have done. I succeeded in carrying resolutions at a Board meeting that the directors should forgo the whole of their fees, that the secretary should be reduced one half, and that the manager should receive half-a-year's salary and be dispensed with altogether.

Lord Falmouth, I argued, had needed no manager other than Bowman, who was now our stud groom. What more was needed than that a director should go down to Cobham every week, to see that all was going on well?

These resolutions being carried, I went back to Leeds, thinking that the Company was saved.

But the vested interests proved too strong. Another meeting was called which I was unable to attend; the resolutions were rescinded and it was decided that the manager should remain on at half salary and that the directors should have half fees. This was no remedy at all, and, as I told the manager, he had far better have cleared out with £500 in his pocket when the Company was ostensibly a great success than hang on and thus be connected with a failure which was certainly impending. Had he gone, people would have said that all would have been well had he remained. However, he would not or could not see the matter in this light, and I was more or less powerless, away at Leeds; so the Company went on floundering to its doom.

The final touch was given when it was decided to employ Mr Herbert Rymill as auctioneer for the yearling sale of 1879.

The reason of this was curious. Messrs Tattersall had for the past year or two been somewhat victimised by yearling buyers who failed to pay, and they proposed in the future to charge 10 per cent. commission on all lots for which they gave delivery orders. Other lots, whose buyers paid cash, were to be at 5 per cent. com-

mission. This struck the directors of the Stud Company as an unreasonable demand, and, as stated above, the business was transferred to Mr Rymill, an excellent auctioneer, but unknown in that capacity to bloodstock buyers. The result was disastrous, for every likely buyer thought he would have to pay money down for everything he bought, though, as a matter of fact, Mr Rymill was quite ready to open accounts with any well-known men, and had provided £5000 to enable him to finance the sale to the satisfaction of everybody. Buyers fought shy, and the total realised for 56 yearlings was only 10,700 guineas, not half the 22,070 guineas which had been totalled at the sale of the year before. Such a drop as this coming on the top of an already dubious financial situation was fatal, and whenever I hear people complaining of Messrs Tattersall's monopoly as auctioneers of bloodstock I always call to mind that one object-lesson.

A meeting of the Company was summoned, and a voluntary liquidation was decided on. There was no real trouble with outside liabilities, but things were going from bad to worse and there was no use in carrying on, even if it had been possible.

It was later on ordered that the liquidation should be under the supervision of the court, and the court continued Mr Rymill in the position of auctioneer at the final sale.

This time he was far more successful, for there were many foreign buyers. One hundred brood mares came under the hammer, and forty-seven foals. Blair Athol, then eighteen years old, and Wild Oats were among the stallions. The total realised was 53,150 guineas, which sufficed to pay off the debentures and all other debts. The shareholders got nothing. Perhaps I should not say that, for I, who was the principal shareholder, had got experience which in later years proved that the money lost by me had not been wasted.

I find that I even wrote some few lines on the subject of the Stud Company :

'Twas but a Company—a soulless thing—
Its only sympathy a common seal;
But to its memory my mind will cling,
And happy dreams of it will o'er me steal,
Deep burying every care and cruel sting
Which those who loved it most had most to feel;
Forgetting, too, finance, and unplaced shares,
And want of money and excess of mares.

Cobham, with all thy faults—no, let me stay,
I will not weary with a stale remark;—
But I *did* love thee; and on many a day
I've gladly gazed and mused from dawn to dark
Upon thy varied beauties; none can say
That truer friend than I e'er trod thy park.
Enough; 'tis past; and men behold in me
A Being strange, who loved a Company.

Where those lines were published I really don't remember—probably in *The Sporting Times*—but the editor of *The Bloodstock Breeders' Review* dug them up from somewhere, and stated, by way of comment: "The temperament of a luckless shareholder who can exploit the Muse in that fashion is, indeed, one to be envied."

So Cobham passes out of my picture for quite a number of years, and I was faced for the first time with the bedrock realities of life, everything having gone wrong as regards finance, so that I had been quickly denuded of many thousands not merely through the Stud Company but in many other directions which need not here be gone into.

I took stock of what the local Bar at Leeds might in its best development result in, and I found it to be a possibility of about £2000 a year. This, with the drawback of living one's life at Leeds, did not seem good enough by any means, for I had a, doubtless, overrated view of my own abilities, and it did not take long to decide that I must come to London and have chambers at the Temple. I was a member of the Junior Carlton Club, and, I don't mind confessing now, had high political ambitions. The next two or three years brought the grinding process

which was destined to show whether the years spent on education had left me with any valuable qualities to the good. It was at least something to realise one's own ignorance and incapacity, and how the passing of examinations does not for a moment fit you for the rough-and-tumble of life. That much I soon understood; but real work is very hard indeed for those who have never known what it is to work, except spasmodically, and in getting down to a genuine working groove I found the effort rather bitter. Work came along fairly well—quite as well as it does for any extreme junior at the Bar. In those days the Law Courts were at Westminster, and I once held a brief there as junior to Sir Edward Clarke—I am sure I forget what it was about, but I know the solicitor was a little old man named Charles Eustace Goldring. Also I had a slice or two of Parliamentary practice—on one occasion with Sir Edmund Beckett—"Clocky" Denison (the late Lord Grimthorpe)—the late Mr Hume Williams, and the late Mr Sylvester. I was the junior of the lot, and had thirty guineas, and five guineas on my brief, with ten guineas refresher each day and five guineas consultation. The case was that of the Beverley Water Works, which some infatuated persons opposed, and the proceedings went on five or six days both before the Commons' and the Lords' Committees. It was the pleasantest, easiest and most remunerative work I had ever done, for instead of having laboriously to take a note of the evidence for your leaders you find all this done by shorthand writers and ready printed next morning.

More profitable still, however, is a brief in an election petition, and I had experience of that too, when there was a petition against the election of the late Colonel Dawnay for Thirsk. I, of course, was briefed because I knew all the people concerned and could tell my leaders more than the solicitor dared to do in his instructions.

In point of fact, the late Quintin Rhodes, son of my original old friend, mentioned earlier in this book, had carried the war so far into the enemy's camp that from

contiguous premises he had contrived what King James I. called a "Lug," and in it he could both hear and see what went on in the office of Mr Cass, the petitioner's solicitor. He revealed these secrets to me and to me only, and one of them—a really lovely one—concerned a leading light of Nonconformity and teetotalism who was a witness for the petitioner. He had been seen and heard in Mr Cass's office when his "proof" was being settled, and he had been invited to take a drink. He had at first refused, but the solicitor had said: "What! Not some old Jamaica?" and had produced a bottle. This had proved too much for the total abstainer, who succumbed to the temptation and drank. Now I had all details of the incident and wrote them down. My leader received the memo. somewhat sceptically, and I could not explain, but assured him it was right; so he proceeded to ask the witness if he had been supplied with drink in Mr Cass's office. This he indignantly denied, saying: "I have never tasted whisky, gin, rum, ale or anything else for seven and twenty years." (*Laughter.*)

Instantly there came the question in the exact words that had been used by Mr Cass: "What! Not some old Jamaica?"

This so startled the witness that he fairly broke down, believing that Cass had given him away, while Cass, on his part, evidently regarded the witness as a traitor. This was but one of many similar instances in which my secret information enabled our side to dumbfound the witnesses for the petitioner.

The most amusing incident of all, however, was the examination of our old Kilvington factotum, Tom Palliser, to whose long career of drunkenness I have already called attention. Never in his life had he dreamed of voting other than "Blue," and, being the oldest inhabitant, he had been asked, when Colonel Dawnay came to canvass at Kilvington, to show the party round to the various voters. He was given half-a-crown for his trouble, and it was urged that this was a bribe. He had gone away after

the election to near Huddersfield, where he had a married daughter, and the contention was that he had been sent there to keep out of the way. Anyhow, he was served with a witness summons and given one pound conduct money.

He arrived in the witness-box in a semi-insolent state of intoxication, and made defiant answers to questions about who had canvassed him. Then, to quote from the report which I have before me :

JUSTICE DENMAN : "You have recollected several that you said you could not remember at first. Tell us all. You are in considerable peril of being sent to prison."

"Indeed, sir ! "

"Yes ; you are."

Then came a long series of questions about the half-crown, and presently Mr Atherley Jones, for the petitioner, asked :

"Did you tell Mr Thompson that you would not give the name of the person who gave you the half-crown until you came here ? "

"No. He made me blind drunk." (*Laughter.*)

"What did you say to Thompson when he asked you about the half-crown ? "

"I don't know what I said, because he made me blind drunk."

"Were you drunk when he asked you ? "

"I should think I was ! " (*Laughter.*)

JUSTICE LOPES : "What did you have to drink ? "

"I don't know. I drank anything." (*Renewed laughter.*)

"Will you swear that money was not provided for you to go away with ? "

"No, sir, it was not. Why the deuce should I have their money ? I have money of my own ! I don't like to be 'put on' so very much." (*Renewed laughter.*)

"I never heard of the subpœna until it was served on me at Meltham [near Huddersfield], and they gave me a sovereign at the same time ; and I got very drunk that day. (*Laughter.*) It was not suggested to me that I should go away. I went of my own accord."

"You were at the Fleece Hotel on the day of the election ? "

"Yes."

"And were you drunk on that day ? "

"Yes. I was drunk at three o'clock."

"Where did you get drunk?"

"In the town. The same places that others get drunk. I get drunk whenever I have the chance."

JUSTICE DENMAN: "You need not make yourself out a greater blackguard than you are."

"I am not a blackguard, sir."

The above is all from the printed report, but I remember most clearly that Mr Justice Denman pursued his theme, and said:

"Yes, you are; a great blackguard, by your own admission."

To which Tom Palliser responded:

"Why, mebbe aboot that!"

I suggested the cross-examination of him, and it runs thus in the report:

"I have been a voter for forty-three years in the borough. During all that time I have supported the 'blues.' That is well known. The gentlemen gave me half-a-crown for going round Kilvington with them. No reference was made to my vote. It took me an hour or more to show them where the voters lived."

On leaving the box he went away mumbling to himself, and more than once looking back defiantly at Mr Justice Denman. The court was just rising for lunch, and I was fearful that he might get himself into some sort of trouble, so went out after him.

On seeing me he at once asked:

"Whea was yon au'd chap 'at called me a blackguard? Ar'd have gi'en him a bit o' lip if he'd said owt more te me!"

He had never been in any but a Magistrates' court before, and seemed to think the judges were merely clerks or other officers of the court. I warned him to be very careful or he would be imprisoned for contempt before he knew where he was. He was highly indignant, however,

at the way he had been treated, for to him—as can be seen from his evidence—drunkenness was merely an agreeable condition, and the idea of it involving blackguardism was too preposterous to entertain for a moment.

The proceedings on the petition lasted for two days, and finally the petition was dismissed with costs, Mr Justice Lopes saying it "had been an unusually pure election," and Mr Justice Denman added that it was "a frivolous petition recklessly conducted."

Had they known or had the petitioners known all that I knew the decision might have been—must have been—different, but all was well that ended well.

For the edification of total abstainers I may say here that Tom Palliser lived to be ninety years of age and was always in robust health.

It was, I think, a year or two before the time of this remarkable election petition that the Fox-terrier Club was formed, and this was done at a dinner given by Mr Harding Cox at his house in Russell Square, where eight or ten of the leading owners of fox-terriers were the guests. A committee was formed to draw up and settle the points of a fox-terrier, and I was deputed to prepare the preliminary draft. This I did, and sent copies round to the other members of the committee for them to make observations and emendations. When I had got these back I had to make a new draft assimilating, so far as I thought desirable, all the suggestions, and after this also had gone the round of the committee I was able to settle a draft, which was eventually agreed on at a meeting.

The points of the fox-terrier, as accepted at the present day by the Fox-terrier Club, have been very little altered since that time. Tom Scott, Bassett, Doyle, Redmond and various others were on that committee: and the Club itself soon introduced several novelties, such as Produce Stakes. Here again I drafted the original conditions; and went to more ambitious lengths by

starting a serial publication of "The Law relating to Dogs," which appeared in several of the early issues of *The Kennel Club Gazette.*

It was quite useful, and sound as far as it went, but I somehow got tired of doing it and allowed it to drop before it was half finished. A young barrister of the present day might do worse than to pursue this idea, for people are constantly having trouble with dogs and very few understand the law in that connection.

I suppose I must have been an acceptable judge of fox-terriers, for on one occasion at Nottingham Show, the exhibitors on making their entries were invited to name two judges whom they would like to act. This resulted in there being a majority of votes for me and Mr Peter Pilgrim, a well-known breeder. It by no means followed, however, that our awards satisfied the exhibitors, one of whom, T. Wootton of Mapperley, wrote me :

> When next you and Peter Pilgrim judge, singly or in couples,
> I will not be there to see !
> God bless you and your Jesters, first, second and third !

We had placed one of Wootton's terriers third instead of first, and I think later shows justified the award, but anyhow it is mere childishness for an exhibitor to attack the judges.

I replied to the letter :

> Oh, may your wishes be complete,
> My dogs and I be blest !—
> So, following on Pilgrim's feet,
> In Heaven we'll find our rest.
> Then, whether coupled or alone
> Judicial deeds I dare,
> That once you've spoken truth I'll own :
> *You never Will be there.*

That terminated the incident and I had no more complaints from Mr Wootton, who was in some respects a remarkable character. His advertisements of fox-terriers

for sale are worth looking up by anyone with old copies of *The Field*. Most of such terriers were :

" True, tried and trusted : the companions in many a wild adventure, from the rat in the gutter to the badger in the brake."

All had splendid pedigrees, but that was before the days of the Kennel Club Stud-book.

I had little chance of sport or even of dog-showing for some years after setting to work in London. Hunting and shooting were for me at an end, and in 1878 and 1879 I did not even see the Derby. My own mares had drifted into the ownership of Hume-Webster, and the various animals that I had been interested in as lessor—viz. Miss Costa, the Gowan, Despotism, etc.—had proved unlucky so far as I was concerned, though they were smart enough afterwards. Someone bought Memorandum for me for 300 guineas after he had won a selling race at Sandown Park in 1877. No one was authorised to do so, and I was at Leeds, but this thing was done, and I was saddled with what was an obviously injudicious purchase. Edwin Parr, who had trained Lord Clifden, trained Memorandum for me at Stoughton, and all but won a race with him at Alexandra Park, when we had £50 on him and he was beaten a short head ; but he never did any good after that, and later, when I leased him to Charles Lund at Malton, he only went from bad to worse.

Altogether, things began to look pretty bad, and there was the fear always before me that it would be impossible to make good at the Bar in time to prevent real trouble.

CHAPTER XXV

Fresh Work—The Staff Corps and Indian Army Fund—*Blair Athol* (the book)—*The Whitehall Review*—Edward Legge—My First Mentor in Journalism—I attract Willoughby Maycock—Death of Lord Beaconsfield—Gladstonian Disasters—Mrs Langtry—Belt *v.* Lawes—Great Scene in Court—I make Belt's Acquaintance—Friends from that Day—Iroquois and Pincus—End of the old *Whitehall Review*—I start *St Stephen's Review*

LONG before the period I am dealing with I had been writing odds and ends for the Press, without any idea of being paid for such work. "The Tale of a Horse" appeared in *The Sporting Times*, before I was married, as also did "The Sport of Shooting" in *The Bird of Freedom*, another of John Corlett's papers. I now began to write a book, *Blair Athol*, and also took on a job as secretary to the Staff Corps and Indian Army Fund, which necessitated minute knowledge of all the many rules and regulations relative to the Pensions and Retirement of officers in the Indian Military Service, as well as the Furlough and Leave Rules. Somehow this work suited me well, and it may perhaps be best described by the letter which the late General Spence was good enough to write after the objects of the movement had been attained, and my occupation was at an end:

30 Colville Terrace,
Bayswater.
22*nd May*, 1882.

The Staff Corps and Indian Army Fund for procuring a revision of Pension and Retirement Regulations

The Committee of the above Fund having closed their proceedings and adjourned *sine die*, it remains for me, as their Chairman, to discharge the pleasing duty of noting the able and

zealous manner in which the work of the Committee was carried out by their excellent Secretary, Mr W. Allison, Barrister-at-Law, from the time the movement was set on foot. In the first place, Mr Allison had to make himself acquainted with the numerous Rules and Regulations issued at different times through a long series of years relative to the Pensions and Retirement of Officers of the Indian Military Service, as well as the Furlough and Leave Rules, which had undergone so many alterations from time to time. This of itself was a heavy task, involving a considerable amount of research and reading up, and how completely Mr Allison had mastered those subjects was evidenced by the many letters and articles written by him and published in some of the leading London journals, and also in the Indian newspapers, in which he showed most clearly and convincingly the absolute necessity for an increase in the scale of retiring Pensions and for a longer period of Furlough and Leave being allowed to count as service for Pensions. It was intended that all Officers concerned in the matter should individually petition Parliament on the subject, and to enable every Officer to frame his own Petition correctly, in accordance with his standing and position in the service, Mr Allison drew up and issued detailed instructions for guidance in every case, and though the promulgation of a revised scale of Pensions put a stop to the submission of these Petitions, Mr Allison was not less entitled to the credit of having framed such clear and comprehensive instructions for their preparation.

As Chairman of the Committee I have been in more frequent communication with the Secretary, both personally and by letter, than any of my colleagues, and nothing could exceed the willing and prompt attention bestowed by him at all times upon any suggestions that were brought under consideration, so that business was always discussed and disposed of most harmoniously, and I can say without hesitation that no Committee, associated as we have been, could have had the assistance of a better qualified or more accomplished Secretary than Mr Allison has been to us. And as I am of opinion that whatever benefit has resulted from the movement is mainly due to the exertions of Mr Allison and the ability with which he advocated the cause, I consider that not only the Committee, but also the Officers of the Service generally, owe him a debt of gratitude, and I hope he may have many opportunities of proving his fitness for similar employment.

Y. J. R. SPENCE, *Lt.-General.*
Chairman of the Committee.

I received a testimonial of a substantial sort, and had finished the book, *Blair Athol,* before the date of General

Spence's letter. Messrs Chapman & Hall, without any demur, agreed to publish it, and it came out in a three-volume edition, all of which was disposed of within a fortnight. This was remunerative enough, and I, later on, by the advice of Mr Chapman, sold the book to Messrs Routledge, who did many editions of it as a yellow-back, with a portrait of Blair Athol, by Sturgess, on the front cover.

My attendance in the Law Courts now grew slacker, for I seemed to have found a quicker way of making the necessary income, and about this time I was introduced to Edward Legge, of *The Whitehall Review*, and cheerfully undertook to write a sporting article for that paper and to help him generally with any amount of other matter that might be required. *The World* and *Truth* used to revile *The Whitehall Review*, principally because it was financed by an egg merchant, but Legge was a thoroughly capable editor and I learned a very great deal from him.

It almost invariably happens when anyone writes about racing for the first time he selects winners in remarkable fashion, and I was no exception to this rule, insomuch that my successes attracted the attention of Willoughby Maycock (now Sir), and that was how I first came to know him. He wrote to ask me to do the weekly leader for a little paper he was bringing out, and this I gladly undertook.

As for *The Whitehall Review*, I became really interested in that paper and had now, of course, resumed my visits to the principal races. Never did I see such an astounding result as when Bend Or beat Robert the Devil for the Derby of that year. It was really almost incredible to anyone who had a good broadside view of them from the hill, for Robert the Devil was like a hare running away from a lot of terriers until there came that paralysing finish.

On the Bend Or-Tadcaster objection which followed I wrote the following for the *Whitehall*:—

Bend Or and Tadcaster, 'twas said,
The names at first were fixed;
But, like the twins of which we've read,
The horses got quite mixed.

And so by boys—too prone to err—
Or else by Arnold's whim,
Bend Or was changed with Tadcaster,
And Tadcaster with him.

Such fruit the strange confusion bore,
When races soon were run,
That, though the public backed Bend Or,
'Twas Tadcaster that won.

But most our wonderment awakes
At this part of the fable—
That Bend Or won the Derby Stakes
While standing in his stable!

And, though that fiction seems the worst,
By this it may be matched—
'Twas Tadcaster that came in first
Although he had been scratched!

The stewards decided that objection in favour of Bend Or, but Mr James Lowther in later years told me that from what had then come to his knowledge he believed their decision was wrong.

The truth appears to be that a mistake was really made when the yearlings were sent to the late Robert Sherwood to break, and, when they went to Robert Peck at Russley, the mistake was not rectified until Colonel Barlow, the Duke of Westminster's master of horse, arrived at Russley to see them galloped, and he, knowing the colts from their foalhood, discovered the error and had them put in their right places. This I know from "Geordie" Spencer, the man who assisted Sherwood in the breaking of them, and subsequently "did" them at Russley. He used to write their names on the sand in front of the doors of their boxes, and after Colonel Barlow's visit, Robert Peck came

and brushed out the names, telling him they were wrong and had to be transposed.

It was on account of *The Whitehall Review* that I first went to see Sir Thomas Lennard and the Belhus hunters, which in those days he used to get together for an annual sale. A rare good sportsman he was. Those visits used to be most enjoyable as bringing back something of the old life. Moreover, he had Prince Charlie standing at Belhus Park for a season or two.

As an instance of the variety of our work on *The Whitehall Review*, I recall that I wrote the article on the death of Lord Beaconsfield, in 1881, and I never put more genuine sentiments of sorrow into any article, for I had always looked on the dead leader as immeasurably superior to every other statesman of the century, and, beyond that, his whole career and his books appealed to me very strongly. His very motto—*Forti nihil difficile*—is a friend in need when you are down on your luck. I have made many pilgrimages to Hughenden Manor, just to think quietly about Disraeli.

But mournful subjects were not greatly in vogue with us, and the editor and I wrote the whole of a Christmas Number, entitled *Our Golden Youth*, which was not half a bad one. Moreover, we brought out a coloured cartoon, which went like wildfire. The subject was a Design for a Memorial Window. Gladstone and Bradlaugh were represented as mediæval saints, one holding the Bible and the other *Fruits of Philosophy*. It was at the time when there was all the row on about Bradlaugh and his oath, and he was supported by Gladstone.

The superscription of the two figures in the cartoon was "*Sanctus Sanctissimus*," and the underline: "By their fruits ye shall know them."

It would not seem a striking cartoon now, by any means, but it took the town by storm at that time, being, as it was, a welcome novelty.

The Gladstone Government had come into power in the spring of 1880. Lord Beaconsfield had been Premier

for over six years, during which the Zulu and Afghan Wars were very arduous enterprises. I shall never forget hearing for the first time the newspaper boys shouting: "Awful slaughter! Heavy fighting!" as they rushed down the streets.

This was when the news of the Isandula disaster had just been received. We have grown so accustomed now to such news cries that they are hardly noticed.

In the Afghan War Lord Roberts had established a reputation which all the later actions of his life served only to strengthen.

Then came in the Gladstone Government and, as by a magician's wand, the whole aspect of affairs was changed. The good that had been done in Afghanistan was deliberately undone, and the Boers who had been saved from the Zulus now seized the opportunity to declare their independence. This was followed, in the spring of 1881, by Majuba Hill, and Gladstone's decision not to fight any more, for fear of bloodguiltiness. Lord Roberts, who had been sent out with a sufficient force to effect a final settlement, was recalled, and a patched-up suzerainty was agreed on which rendered the future Boer War only a question of time.

Lord Randolph Churchill was beginning to come to the front in Parliament in those days, though Jacob Bright was supposed to have said something very much to the point when by a pretended mistake he spoke of "the noble Lord" as the Member for "Woodcock" instead of Woodstock. Trouble was brewing in Egypt, where again the hopeless Gladstonian weakness and vacillation were destined to produce a plentiful crop of misfortune. Altogether there was much to turn men's minds to active thoughts of public life, for since the time of the Crimean War our country had been suffered to go on in humdrum fashion, not even venturing to intervene when the Prussians annexed Schleswig-Holstein, though it would have been possible then to check at its source the cancerous growth which has since grown so widely over Europe,

and has at last had to be cut out by years of devastating war.

The Zulu, Afghan and first Boer Wars had at least dispelled British apathy to a considerable extent, and for my part I longed for a chance to really gird at the Gladstonians if only it were possible: but *The Whitehall Review* was not much of a medium for such efforts. In fact, the society side of it was overdone. Legge had—as he has since demonstrated in several excellent books—very considerable sources of information about royal personages, not only of this country, but also, in particular, the Empress Eugenie and the late Empress of Austria. Almost too much of this went into the paper; and the opposition dubbed the editor "Whitehall Jenkins."

Nevertheless I remember we published a very favourable critique of Mrs Langtry, when she first appeared on a stage, and this she did in company with Mrs Labouchere. Nothing that *Truth* had written about "Whitehall Jenkins" marred *The Whitehall Review's* full appreciation of that performance.

It was shortly afterwards that I first met Mrs Langtry, and we have been very good friends ever since, though my sphere of influence was diverted to her horses after she had taken to racing; and I never posed seriously as a dramatic critic.

Little did I dream at the time under notice that I should long afterwards buy for her an Australian horse (Merman) with which to win the Cesarewitch, and that he would win it.

Another friend I made in 1881, and that was Richard Belt, the sculptor, whose work was then all the rage, and it was Queen Victoria's wish that caused his relief profile of Lord Beaconsfield to be placed over the tablet in Hughenden Church. It is an old story how the great and increasing success of Belt led to attacks by jealous rivals, whose libels were published in *Vanity Fair*, the gist of them being that he did not himself execute the works which purported to be his, but employed a "ghost,"

who was the real artist. This culminated in the famous libel case of Belt *v.* Lawes, and I, who still frequented the Law Courts whenever I had time, was present from start to finish of that case. I was not personally acquainted with the sculptor at that time, but grew more and more convinced, as the case proceeded, that he had been grossly maligned. It was decided, half-way through the case, that he should give a practical demonstration of his ability by modelling a bust of a man named Pagliatti in one of the rooms of the court. This test was carried out, and never shall I forget the "sensation in court" when the bust was brought in on a tray, with Pagliatti walking alongside it.

Instantly there was almost deafening applause. People sprang up and shouted "Bravo!" I question if such a noise was ever heard in a law court. Quiet was not restored for a very long time. The bust was so good that the jury's verdict was certain from the moment they saw it. That verdict was, of course, for Belt, with very heavy damages and costs against Lawes. It is ancient history now how the latter, after a fruitless appeal, and being mulcted in further costs, went bankrupt and never paid a farthing. I mention this case because it was the occasion of my introducing myself, as a stranger, to Richard Belt, for I was anxious to tell him how thoroughly I sympathised with him in all the annoyance and trouble to which he had been subjected, and how glad I was that his assailants had been so signally routed. He and I have been friends since that day, and never more so than when his enemies, some few years after the trial, brought trouble on him by a most nefarious scheme, of which in course of time full confession was made and such redress as was possible offered. The conspiracy against poor Belt broke his health, but it could not kill his genius, and he never did anything finer than his bust of Lord Kitchener, which was exhibited in the Royal Academy in 1917 and now stands on the Grand Staircase at the War Office.

In that year, 1881, Peregrine won the 2000 Guineas,

and raised hopes that the Beadsman male line, which had flourished so abundantly with the Palmer, Rosicrucian, Blue Gown, Green Sleeves and Pero Gomez more than ten years earlier, had now come to stay, but all was not well with Peregrine, and the American-bred Iroquois beat him for the Derby.

Jacob Pincus, the trainer of Iroquois, was very crude in his methods at that time. He would even give the colt a strong gallop after a race if the running had not been to his mind; but as Iroquois had a great constitution, no harm was done, and the Prince of Wales' Stakes at Ascot and the St Leger both followed on the Derby victory. Pincus became very popular at Newmarket, and ultimately took to living there and training a horse or two of his own, nor was there ever a more genuine manifestation of public approval than when he ran his whole stable one afternoon at headquarters and won a race with each of them.

Iroquois was a lithe, hardy, clean-limbed horse, and he must have had an iron constitution to stand knocking about as he did. He did little or no good, however, at the stud when he returned to America.

It may have been judged that my existence in 1881 was a somewhat hand-to-mouth one, for we had now two children, and life's little worries had thus accumulated. It had been a nasty jar to drop from a pinnacle of what I thought such easy possibilities of success to the curious mix-up of work in which I was now intermittently engaged, but I had not lost faith in myself all the same, and was inclined to adopt the "A time will come!" attitude. It happened, however, that the worthy egg merchant took upon himself to dispose of *The Whitehall Review*, and whoever was the new proprietor did not make terms with the editor, so Legge retired, and I was left for a week or two to imagine that the post had devolved on me. I did, in fact, edit the paper during what was simply an interregnum, and then my tenure of office also came to an end. A new staff came in, and all I

can say of them is that the paper never did any good afterwards.

Being now equipped with fair knowledge how to edit a paper, and being filled with a burning desire to attack the Gladstonian Government and all its works effectively, I determined by hook or by crook to start a new paper, subject to no control but my own, and this idea took shape, after a lot of strenuous, and often disappointing, work in *St Stephen's Review*.

CHAPTER XXVI

St Stephen's Review—A Desperate Adventure—Never subsidised by the Party—Less than £500 Capital—Mr Grantham, Q.C., a Director—Photographs reproduced in Germany—Lord Marcus Beresford and Mr George Lambton—Others who wrote—Mr Gladstone advertises us—How we followed this up—Mr Gladstone's £100—Mr Joseph Chamberlain's £250—Beauty Competition—A Libellous Sub-Editor — He libels my Friend; Edward Legge—Mr Grantham advises—We lose heavily—First Meeting with Phil May

I HAD seen both Shotover and St Blaise win the Derby before my plans for *St Stephen's Review* were sufficiently matured, and both these animals were extremely lucky to win. Bruce should beyond all question have beaten Shotover, but his jockey, "Thammy" Mordan, declared that he shied at a piece of paper. It is equally certain that Galliard was a better horse than St Blaise, and it was said that Galliard's defeat led to Lord Falmouth's decision to sell his horses, but this his lordship afterwards denied.

The *St Stephen's Review* project moved slowly, and had I known as much about newspapers as I do now it would have never gone through at all. I got the nominal support of most of the influential members of the party, but the arrangement of finance was another matter altogether. There are many people who would be greatly interested even now to know the financial history of *St Stephen's Review*, but I am only concerned to state here that the Conservative party had from first to last nothing to do with it. Never a penny of the party money found its way to my paper. Mr Akers-Douglas was the patronage secretary all the time, and he knows that the above statement is strictly true. Captain R. W. Middleton is dead, or he also would verify the

statement. Sometimes they would buy our cartoons at five pounds per thousand for election purposes, but that was a mere matter of business and depended on whether they liked the cartoon. Never once in the history of the paper was advice asked from the party as to what the subject of a cartoon should be. These subjects were always chosen at a weekly meeting of members of the staff and, after discussion, decided on by myself alone.

Seven years is a big slice to take out of anyone's life, and I want to make it clear that I did not spend seven years on *St Stephen's Review* as a party hack. I was a masterless man throughout, as I have been—perhaps unfortunately—all my life, save that I made the memory of Disraeli my master—or mentor—and no paper ever attacked certain aspects of "mutton-headed" Conservatism more violently than did *St Stephen's Review*.

To tell the truth, I thought my time had come and that I had the ball at my feet if once I could "get a move on" with this paper, and it so chanced that other people came to entertain the same opinion, as the paper progressed, but I will now give the somewhat startling information that I started *St Stephen's Review* with less than £500 in the bank. This was the subscribed capital of a Limited Company, of which Mr Grantham, Q.C., afterwards Mr Justice Grantham, was one of the directors, and I am sure he had no more idea than I had of the cost of running a newspaper. *St Stephen's Review* was to be printed on costly paper by Ballantyne, Hanson & Co. It could hardly be produced for less than £150 a week, and yet we "jumped off," on 17th March 1883.

This initial fact is so remarkable, having regard to the time which the paper was destined to run, that I cannot too strongly emphasise once more my definite statement that it never received any financial support from the Conservative party.

Assistance from the purely journalistic point of view

I often received, for I or the sub-editor would go almost every week to Downing Street before the paper went to Press, and Mr Akers-Douglas used to tell us any little items of news that he thought fit to communicate. In that way was the paper beholden to the party and in no other.

A complaint was once made to the Committee of the Junior Carlton about a *St Stephen's Review* cartoon which reflected on a member of the Government. I was a member of the club, but the committee, in their wisdom, took no action.

The motto chosen for *St Stephen's Review* was :

> Nothing extenuate nor set down aught in malice,

and that was faithfully adhered to, though we were defendants in certain strange cases about which I shall have something to say. The life of the paper, however, covered a very interesting period, and in this present book I can give no more than a brief sketch of it. This point alone is worth a note—that when after a few months we found it necessary to give the portraits of people who formed the subjects of principal articles, it was impossible to get photographs reproduced on blocks except by sending them to Germany. This necessitated a delay of at least three weeks and would have been totally needless had it not been for the apathy which free imports had caused in this country.

Those blocks when they came from Germany were atrociously bad, but such as they were we produced them, and they were appreciated. Compare such a production now with one of the lovely things that appear in *Country Life Illustrated* and it is easy indeed to see what a change the " whirligig of time " has brought.

The staff of *St Stephen's Review*, both literary and artistic, was always a good one, and it may be a surprise to many to know that, as I had to spread myself as editor, I did not write the sporting stuff, except on emergency,

and got none but the best to do it. Lord Marcus Beresford did a great deal of it (marvellously well) over the signature of "Aliquis," and Mr George Lambton also played a considerable part as a racing contributor on the special recommendation of Mr James Lowther.

Lord Colin Campbell was among the earliest members of the staff, and he was editing with most careful research, at the British Museum, a whole budget of unpublished letters of Lady Hamilton, which I had by great good fortune obtained. He carried this on through four or five numbers and then he had to cease work, owing to the anxieties of the law case in which he was involved. What came of those Lady Hamilton letters after Captain Finch-Hatton, from whom I had the loan of them, received them back, I do not know, but they showed her character to have been much better than is generally accepted.

Percy Fitzgerald, Clement Scott and Percy Reeve were the earliest dramatic critics of the paper, and the last-named remained to the end. W. B. Woodgate did the acrostics, and my old editor, Edward Legge, also helped us with a series of articles. The Hon. Mrs Armytage did the Ladies' Column. F. C. Philips was a regular contributor, and Haddon Chambers joined forces later on, as did William Mackay and many other notables. Colonel Malleson used to do a lot of the solid work, and "Marmaduke," as C. E. Jerningham styled himself many years afterwards, was responsible for much of the society element. There was no lack of talent, only it may be I was too much in earnest from the political point of view.

It was on the morning of 17th March 1883 when I succeeded in getting the first number made up and passed for press.

That night an infernal machine was exploded in the area outside one of the Government offices, just off Parliament Street, and I saw the havoc it had created as I walked home to Victoria Street about 6 A.M. Next week I, of course, commented on this, and wrote: "Too well

has the lesson been learned that remedial legislation is the fruit of outrage, and that a Liberal Ministry can be stimulated by dynamite and assassinations into any conceivable surrender. It is the old, fatal principle, first inculcated by Mr Gladstone after the Clerkenwell explosion. The mere sequence of concession on outrage must necessarily prove disastrous, even though it is not admitted by casuists that the connection of cause and effect exists between them."

In its first six months *St Stephen's Review* offices consisted of but two rooms on the first and second floors of David Bogue, the publisher, 3 St Martin's Place, W.C. The early issues were far from brilliant. The continuous anxiety of finance and all the ceaseless details of unwonted business perplexed me into stupidity; but Mr Gladstone gave us a good advertisement when at the Inaugural Banquet of the National Liberal Club, in early May 1883, he said:

> We all know a class of our fellow-citizens—a very humble class—who pursue their calling under no favourable conditions in the streets of London, and whose lot, so far as my observation goes, is only varied by their walking sometimes on the kerbstone and sometimes in the gutter. (*Laughter.*)
>
> These fellow-citizens of ours have it for their lot that the manly and interesting proportions of the human form are, in their case, disguised, both before and after, by certain oblong formations, which appear to have no higher purpose than what is called conveying an advertisement. (*Laughter.*) It is to one of those advertisements, conspicuous in the streets of London, that I wish for a moment to call your attention. We have seen—I think it was about three weeks ago, and for a considerable time, but perhaps the funds for the prolongation of the process may have fallen short—(*Laughter*)—we have seen, I say, these placards representing as an emblem the clock, the beautiful clock of the tower of the Houses of Parliament, and this emblem was, as I think, with a singular infelicity, appended to the announcement of the foundation of a new Conservative journal. (*Laughter.*) A Conservative, gentlemen—and this is its great characteristic—a Conservative clock is always, in all circumstances, and on every question, behind time. (*Cheers.*)

In a footnote to the above extract I wrote, in the issue of 5th May 1883 :

I have at once made arrangements to prove to Mr Gladstone that the clock of *St Stephen's Review*, at any rate, is not behind time, for the sandwichmen have been chartered to "assemble in their thousands" near the Houses of Parliament, displaying not only the admirable clock tower device, but also disguising their "interesting and manly" after-proportions with the above extract from Mr Gladstone's speech. This has been done on Thursday afternoon, the day after the speech. It is needless to say that Mr Gladstone has been placed on the free list of the paper.

The sequel to this was truly remarkable, for on 7th June I received a letter containing a Bank of England note for £100, which the writer, who signed as "A Happy Medium," said, "Mr Gladstone has deputed me to remit to you."

The following is a copy of our banker's receipt, which was forwarded to Mr Gladstone :

THE CONSERVATIVE PRESS COMPANY (LIMITED)
St Stephen's Review

Banker's Receipt

Received the 6th day of June, 1883, of Mr Gladstone, per "A Happy Medium," the sum of One hundred pounds (£100)
DIMSDALE & Co.

In sending this receipt to Mr Gladstone I wrote the following letter :—

3 ST MARTIN'S PLACE,
7th June 1883.

SIR,—I beg to enclose a receipt for £100 which was forwarded to me, as Editor of *St Stephen's Review*, by an anonymous correspondent, who stated that the donation came from you. I confess that this seems in the last degree improbable, but as you some time ago took occasion to suggest that our financial arrangements were not satisfactory—I allude to your Aquarium speech—it seems possible that you may have made an effort to assist us.

In any case, as I have received £100, and you are the only person

mentioned in connection with it, I can see but one course open to me, and that I am adopting by sending you the receipt.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

W. Allison (Editor, *St Stephen's Review*).

The Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, M.P.

The following was the reply :—

10 Downing Street, Whitehall,
8th June 1883.

Sir,—Mr Gladstone is obliged to you for your courtesy forwarding to him the receipt for £100 stated to have been contributed by him in aid of *St Stephen's Review*; and he desires me to inform you that he has no claim to be considered the donor of the sum in question.

The receipt is herewith returned.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

E. W. Hamilton.

Not long afterwards a similar joke of agreeable character was played on us in the name of "Joseph Chamberlain," and this time it took the form of a cheque for £250 drawn on a bank in Birmingham and signed "Joseph Chamberlain." The cheque was met in due course, but here again Mr Chamberlain denied all knowledge of it.

Obviously from the above details, it will be seen that I had good friends somewhere behind the scenes, though I did not identify them until long afterwards. Incidentally Mr Gladstone served admirably for advertising purposes. Still the financial position was absurdly weak, and I even started a "Beauty Competition" to run over several weeks, voters for the most beautiful woman in her Majesty's dominions having to buy a paper in order to fill in a coupon. The result was rather funny, for the week before the poll closed Miss Daisy Vern headed the list, with Mrs Langtry second, and Miss Kate Vaughan a rather bad third. Just before the conclusion someone came in to the publisher's office and inquired how many copies he would have to buy to give coupons enough to place Kate Vaughan at the head of the poll, and the

publisher, thinking only of business, told him 500. The 500 copies were bought and paid for at once, and the publisher regretted he had not said 1000, but his demand did not much overstep the necessary mark, for this was the final state of the poll :

Miss Kate Vaughan . . .	1268
Miss Daisy Vern	1171
Mrs Langtry	1012
Miss Violet Cameron . . .	386
Miss Constance Gilchrist . .	365

and so on—a very long list.

But that is no sort of way to promote the circulation of a paper, though it paid well for the time being.

We were struggling along and doing better each week, but no paper that ever was could be made to pay unless at least sufficient outlay for one year's production is forthcoming before there is a hope of return, and having worked in all the early months single-handed I succumbed to the temptation of a sub-editor, who, though an absolute amateur, invested £500 in the paper. This sum, it was agreed, should be restored to him if he were dismissed, except for misconduct. He was by way of being a poet, and he was also the author of a novel which I myself burlesqued in our paper. It chanced that my good friend, Edward Legge, wrote a very adverse criticism of this novel in some paper with which he was connected at that time, and the indignant author asked me to allow him to attack Legge in our columns. I at once refused any such permission, and told him, if he was ever going to do any good work he should never think of resenting criticism. Besides I would not, in any circumstances, have let him use *St Stephen's Review* as a medium for his wrath against the man from whom I learned the rudiments of editing.

So, as I thought, the question was settled, but the sub-editor had the persistence of Robert Bruce's spider and,

despite all my refusals, went upstairs one night to the foreman printer (one Faunch, whom Legge will remember in *Whitehall Review* days) with a letter from himself to the paper, which he said was to go in among the paragraphs. It was set up, and appeared next day between two paragraphs, which I had numbered consecutively in the proof slips, and, as the context showed, were intended to follow one another: but there, between them, was this ridiculous letter, attacking Legge. There was nothing in it really except silly abuse, such as "Whitehall Jenkins of Egg Shop and Servants' Hall Renown," but some lawyer friends of Legge's seized on it and started an action for libel against us. It goes without the saying that I got rid of the sub-editor forthwith, and proposed to hold his £500 to abide the result of the action that had been brought against us, but I suppose I never was enough of a lawyer myself to understand that the common-sense course is always incorrect.

Mr Grantham, Q.C., declared that it would prejudice us greatly in the trial if we had not repaid the sub-editor his £500 when dismissing him. In vain I protested that by paying him we should admit ourselves parties to his offence. Mr Grantham, Q.C., was a great legal authority, and I was not. So the £500 was disgorged. I use the word advisedly—and Mr Grantham had the brief for us to defend the action.

On the day of trial I was down at the Law Courts in plenty of time, but there found that Mr Grantham had settled it out of court on terms that we should pay £300 damages and costs!

No doubt the learned counsel acted for the best according to his lights; but Edmund Yates, against whom an action for a vastly more offensive libel had been brought by the same plaintiff, defended it shortly afterwards and got a verdict.

This was the most stupid legal case in which I was ever engaged, though my sympathy, as regards the merits of a really ridiculous offence, was wholly with the

plaintiff. It cost the paper fully £1000, and at that stage of existence such a loss was nearly fatal, as can be well understood. The worst of it was that but for the lawyers, I am sure the thing could have been settled without any payment at all.

We fought through these evil days somehow or other, and I remember struggling desperately for novelties so as to compel the public to take notice. One was found in an old play-bill, of 9th January 1872, of theatricals at Southbourne, Mr Joseph Chamberlain's house at that time. The play was :

THE LIAR

By SAMUEL FOOTE

and the following was the cast :—

SIR JAMES ELLIOT . . .	*Mr Alfred Osler*
OLD WILDING	*Mr C. Beale*
YOUNG WILDING	**Mr J. Chamberlain**
PAPILLON	*Mr W. P. Beale*
MISS GRANTHAM	*Mrs W. P. Beale*
MISS GODFREY	*Miss M. E. Beale*

Some of the actors as mentioned above are, I hope, still alive. It can perhaps hardly be realised by the modern generation that Mr Chamberlain in the eighties was regarded much as Mr Lloyd George was, in his unregenerate days, during the Boer War ; and the discovery of this play-bill, showing how he had been starred as the impersonator of THE LIAR, was almost a triumph.

In further efforts after sensation in lieu of immediate capital I even gave a facsimile full-page autograph letter from Marwood giving instructions how to hang a man, and it bore his official stamp " Wm. Marwood, Executioner, Church Lane, Horncastle, Lincolnshire, England."

That this attracted attention goes without the saying, but it was certainly playing the game rather low down to condescend to such an effort. Worse than all, while I had been for a brief holiday after the first half-year of

the paper, I returned to find myself involved in a fierce religious controversy, my deputy having admitted an article entitled "The Loves of the Priests." Clement Scott had sent in his resignation, and there were wigs on the green all round. Nothing could have been more distasteful than to be mixed up in such a broil, but you cannot repudiate your own paper.

It ended in us going into offices at 21 John Street, Adelphi—and very good offices they were—and in my securing a sub-editor whose pen-name was "Edgar Lee." He was known to his familiars as William Tasker, and he was an extraordinary little man with a bald head and side whiskers. He could write about anything and everything, and he would work all day and all night. For me, I believe, he would have done anything. Baron Munchausen himself had not a greater capacity for simulating truth while telling the most astounding fictions. He was a spiritualist, he was—well, what was he not?—he had a heart of gold all the time—that much at least I know. There came with him Eaton Edeveain, an elderly barrister, who undertook the business management of the paper. He was a good sort enough, and the father of "Templer Saxe," who attained to some repute as a baritone singer, but the old gentleman was a muddler at best, and yet it was through him I discovered a treasure indeed. He happened to show me one or two line sketches of Lionel Brough, Toole and Irving, and by some strange intuition I was convinced at once that I had never seen work which showed such genius.

We were nearly approaching the day when the first Christmas Number of the paper had to be published, and the artist who had been commissioned to do the big double-page picture had failed so miserably that the idea of having his effort reproduced seemed out of the question. But what were we to do? I looked at the two or three sketches mentioned above, and said to Edeveain: "Who did these? He could get us out of the trouble, if there is time."

He replied that they were done by a boy about nineteen years old named

PHIL MAY;

only, of course, he did not accentuate the name at that time.

I asked him to go at once and ascertain if this "boy" could do a cartoon very quickly representing all the principal characters of the moment. In no long time I had the answer in the affirmative, and met Phil May for the first time. He was a lean, cadaverous-looking youth, with close-cropped, very dark hair, and eyes that looked through you like gimlets. If ever there was the fire of genius in any eyes, it was there in Phil May's, and whatever mistakes I have made in my life I made none that time, for I knew right off that I had found something quite abnormally excellent.

Well, he produced the original of the cartoon within forty-eight hours of that moment when I first saw him, and it was published in our Christmas Number of 1883. That, with black and white sketches in the same number, is the first work of Phil May's ever published by a London paper; and I think I have some reason to regard myself as a world's benefactor in having discovered him and given him that start.

He was at a low ebb at the time I mention, and might not have lived to prove the power that was in him.

Poor Phil! He has been greatly misunderstood, in a personal sense. Most people will tell you he was a drunkard, but I, who knew him very well indeed, can declare with truth that he was nothing of the sort. He was a convivial soul, liable to exceed when in congenial company, but never drinking for drink's sake, and there is a great distinction here.

Phil May did four full-page drawings and a half-page one for that Christmas Number, besides the big cartoon, so the speed of his work can be imagined. I have one of the originals now, and it is doubtless valuable.

For three years from that time Phil May worked for

St Stephen's Review, and it was amazing to me that his work was not better appreciated by the public. I can truly say I never dreamed of doubting its pre-eminence; and, strangely enough, this was understood in Australia sooner than in London, though they had nothing but exported copies of our paper to judge from. Phil May was offered a three years' engagement on *The Sydney Bulletin* at £30 a week, and he came to me to ask what he had best do.

CHAPTER XXVII

Tom Merry's Cartoons—The Rake's Progress—Lord Salisbury's Appreciation—*St Stephen's Saturnalia*—Great Work by Phil May—Death of Gordon—Defeat of the Gladstonian Government—Joy of Lord Randolph—Great Scheme for Provincial Papers—Lord Randolph President—Grievous Disappointment—Lord Randolph and Titles—Breakdown of Provincial Scheme—Collapse of Stoke Park Club—Phil May leaves for Australia—I save *St Stephen's Review*

I HAD always thought a good deal of the American *Puck*, with its coloured political cartoons, and in the first week of 1884 we followed on the same line, having secured Tom Merry to do the work. He was a lithographer by trade and a clever rough-and-ready artist. He had been some time on the stage at the halls as a lightning cartoonist, chalking portraits of well-known characters on a board in a minute or two. It used to be an effective "turn." Moreover, from his lithographic work on posters and such-like, Tom Merry had gained an exact knowledge how to hit the public eye from a distance or at first glance. Thus it was that he became the really most effective political cartoonist of the day. His work was crude, and people used often to ask me why I allowed such "vulgar" cartoons to be published. I always replied that I meant the cartoons for the public and not for fastidious readers of the paper. In short, the cartoon and the paper were two distinct entities; and the cartoons were a big factor in many an election. An early sensation was created by the publication of the Rake's Progress Series, representing Mr Gladstone as the Rake, and a complete series of that is now worth a lot of money, for I stopped the production of the third cartoon after only 500 had been printed, feeling sure that it was too

Hogarthian to be acceptable on Messrs Smith & Son's bookstalls, as they then were. A Bowdlerised cartoon was published instead with the paper, and later, when the "returns" had come in from publishers, we made up a complete series of 500, including the cartoon which I had stopped, and sold them at 30s. a set. They were all sold right off, and the late Lord Salisbury had two of the sets. I always regretted that it was impossible in any orthodox fashion to acquaint Mr Gladstone with this fact.

Phil May occasionally did our cartoons, and he was an incomparably superior artist to Tom Merry, but somehow his work did not catch the public so readily, except in one instance, and that cartoon was "The Old Gravedigger's Christmas Eve." It was published on 27th December 1884, and represented Mr Gladstone as a gravedigger, the tombs all round about him showing the names of well-known men who had fallen in Egypt that year, and the inference—a woefully prophetic one—was that the grave then being dug was for Gordon, who was holding out at Khartoum. It is a gruesome cartoon, with moonlight effects, and it created some sensation.

What progress *St Stephen's Review* had made by the end of that year may be judged from the Christmas Number, *St Stephen's Saturnalia*, to which the late Lord Lytton ("Owen Meredith") and the late Earl of Carnarvon were the principal contributors. Lord Lytton's contribution was "Bernardo: A Study of Sentiment." It is written in dramatic form for three characters, and the only wonder is that it has never been republished, for much of it is very beautiful. It was illustrated by George Cruikshank.

Lord Carnarvon wrote "The Magic Mirror," giving word pictures of Parliament as it was in various epochs. Even Sir Wilfrid Lawson contributed verses to that number, and Mr Horace Lennard wrote a clever skit after the manner of Aristophanes, entitled "Birds of a Feather; or, Larks with the Greek."

DEATH OF CASSIM BABA AND HASSAN

From "St. Stephen's Saturnalia," Dec. 25, 1884

Phil May and I did "The Forty Thieves," in Pantomime style, Mr Gladstone being, of course, Cassim and Lord Salisbury Ali Baba. Mr Chamberlain was the captain of the forty thieves, who were members of the Ministry and Parnellites. Lord Randolph was Ganem, and so on.

The final scene, when the thieves are destroyed with the boiling oil of "General Election," is very effective in Phil May's full-page drawing. Ganem has just cut off the head of Hassan (Mr Chamberlain) and Cassim Baba is lying *in extremis*, while Morgiana (Britannia), with Ali Baba (Lord Salisbury) at her side, is holding the steaming oil-can to the old man's nose, and he says :

> Alas ! I perish. Deadly's my objection
> To the least sniff of GENERAL ELECTION.

It will interest many to see a specimen of Phil May's earlier methods and so the page drawing referred to is reproduced here, but of course on a much smaller scale.

That Christmas Number was a very great success indeed and made a big profit. All was going well with the paper now, except in regard to business management. We were doing about 7000 copies a week, and advertisements came in in abundance. Our finances were still weak, but we flourished exceedingly nevertheless, and political excitement was growing higher as the attempted relief of Gordon hung fire. Finally, in the second week of February, came the news of Gordon's death. We received it on a Wednesday morning, and Phil May at once dashed off on transfer paper a study of Gladstone as Macbeth, with Gordon as Banquo's ghost. This was published the following (Thursday) morning, and so poor were the methods of reproduction in those days that it was deemed quite extraordinary to have got this sketch out so quickly. It could not have been done had it not been drawn on transfer paper.

Events then began to march rapidly and ministers barely escaped defeat on a vote of censure in the beginning of

March. Their majority was only fourteen. I was finding myself a *persona grata* among official personages on the Opposition side at that time, and among other notable men I met was Ismail Pasha, who was then making an effort, under the auspices of A. M. Broadley, to regain his lost position in Egypt; but, said he, "I trusted in England and the explicit promises of English agents and therefore I fell." I must say he impressed me very favourably, and I have often wondered what became of him after he retired to Turkey. He was very bitter about the financial houses who had engineered the various Egyptian loans, and he showed me that the Egyptians had in 1873 received £25,000,000 less than the sum for which they became responsible.

Dhuleep Singh came to me about that time with his grievances. His income had been reduced to one half of what he considered his due, and he contemplated going out to India and raising trouble there. What benefit he was to derive from me never transpired, but it was interesting to hear all he had to say, and how he claimed the Kohinoor as his property.

Tom Merry's cartoons in *St Stephen's* were now varied for a few months by some which were sent in by Matt Morgan, who gained much fame years before on *The Tomahawk*. His son also was responsible for several, and the "Libretto for Liberals," which was written each week in connection with the cartoon, was growing more and more as if working up to a victory. We produced a first-rate Primrose Number on 18th April, with original MS. of Disraeli in facsimile, and delightful drawings by Phil May. It sold like wildfire and was crammed with advertisements.

On 30th May 1885 appeared Phil May's representation of Romeo (J. Chamberlain) parting from (the Grand Old) Juliet. On 6th June there came a cartoon by Phil May, entitled "The Welsher"—it was Derby week—and Gladstone is running right out of the picture, pursued by the infuriated Opposition and the British bull-dog.

JOY OF LORD RANDOLPH
From St. Stephens Review," June 13, 1885

It was soon to be a case of running from scent to view, and at ten minutes to two on the Tuesday morning of the second week in June the Government was defeated on a beer question and resigned office at four o'clock that afternoon. The joy of Lord Randolph when the division result was announced was dealt with by Phil May.

So then the Conservatives were in at last, and one of the first results was to me disappointing, for I was about to publish an interview with Mr Chaplin, which was a really good one, when he wrote to cut out the best part of it, as he had accepted office under Lord Salisbury and did not wish his views on Free Trade and Protection to be dealt with in the circumstances.

However, I dashed into a very big scheme for Conservative newspapers of which *St Stephen's Review* was to be merely the parent. The idea was to issue partly printed sheets—that is, on the four inside pages—to provincial papers, as is done by certain other firms, and that these sheets should have Phil May sketches and attractive matter, while administering the political dose sparingly. The local people, of course, print their stuff on the other four pages and so make their paper complete. I got together a General Council of 700 of the leading Conservatives in the country for this scheme, and the following was the Executive Council:—W. T. Marriott, Q.C., M.P.; Sir F. Milner, Bart, M.P.; Hon. A. C. L. Cadogan; W. Grantham, Q.C., M.P.; Colonel G. B. Malleson, C.S.I.; W. Allison. Then I asked Lord Randolph Churchill to be President, and he consented.

The Company was formed with a capital of £100,000 in 100,000 shares of £1 each, and the only weak spot in it was that the shares were not at least £10 each. There was no plunder for promoters, and £2000 was spent over preliminaries and advertising. I called a meeting at the Cannon Street Hotel with all the Executive and many of the General Council there and a big attendance of the public. Then the scheme was launched and, at first, success seemed certain, for there were over 10,000

applications for shares, but when these were gone into it was found that with scarcely any exceptions they were all for a £1 share, the idea having become prevalent that it was a subscription limited to that sum.

It was grievously disappointing, more especially as Lord Randolph, who never troubled to inquire what the financial response had been, sent for me and asked me to arrange to start a halfpenny paper in Birmingham. I thought of the motto, "*Forti nihil difficile*," and said I would at once do what was possible.

Now I knew a great supporter of the party, who had done many public services and had twice contested somewhat hopeless seats at the request of Lord Abergavenny. He was a very rich man and to him I went. Having explained to him what Lord Randolph wanted, I said I did not see how less than £30,000 would be any use for such a project. He asked if I thought it would pay as an investment, and I said that was very doubtful, but it would carry a paper well through a General Election.

On that he told me he was inclined to entertain the idea, but he should like some assurance that if he did this thing his services would be recognised; if I could procure him any such assurance, I should have £20,000 down and £10,000 in three months.

Now this perfectly true story is very interesting. I went to Lord Randolph and told him exactly how the matter stood and that the necessary money would be forthcoming for the Birmingham paper; but he at once said: "No; as long as I have anything to do with the government of this country I will never be a party to anything of that kind. I am sorry, but we must do without the paper."

This was a case where the capitalist was a man who had done enough good work to really deserve a peerage vastly more than many who have received that honour, but Lord Randolph's attitude on such questions was very clearly defined then, and that, too, when the service wished for was one for his own political benefit in his

campaign at Birmingham. I think this record should be widely known and remain always to his credit.

Beaten but not defeated, I retired to see what else could be done, and presently found an old lawyer named Charsley who by judicious purchase of a certain big reversion had come into an income of some £30,000 a year, but only during the tenure of the life tenant.

He was a very keen politician and almost unbalanced by his own prosperity, as was subsequently shown, but he cheerfully entered into my scheme for illustrated "insides" for provincial papers and agreed to lose £1000 in establishing it. This I proposed to do by undercutting the existing agencies to the extent of £20 loss each week (a most unholy device, but my own), and so with the assistance of the indefatigable Tasker this part of the grand scheme was fairly started. We had forty provincial papers taking our sheets within a fortnight of commencement, and there was promise of rapid extension of our clientele. Here, at any rate, a good work had been done, but when I turned to *St Stephen's Review*—the "parent" paper—it was with a chill foreboding, as a company with 10,000 shareholders needed a city office and secretary, with much extra expense, and the capital actually subscribed had been insignificant.

It was at that time I first met Richard Parker Mortlock, now Major, who came to me as secretary (not of the Company), and we have been closely associated ever since, as clients of the International Horse Agency and Exchange Limited know, though they can have but small idea of the troubled waters we had to get through or over with the old paper.

I now found myself with a Board of Directors, and one of them, Colonel Malleson, a severe literary critic, but without the touch of humour which is absolutely essential in journalism, whatever it may be in writing history. He was a most able man, in his way, and a very good sort, but he hampered me dreadfully, more especially when he took a dislike, for no reason, to J. R. Taylor, who was managing

the paper. Taylor was really a most invaluable man. He had been with Messrs W. H. Smith & Sons so many years that he retired with several thousand pounds to his credit. These he proceeded to get rid of in a brief space of time by taking Her Majesty's Theatre and running *The Ticket of Leave Man* there with a first-class company. It ran for only about three weeks, and that was the end. Then we got Taylor to manage the paper, and as he knew all the bookstall men and the publishing ropes generally he was able to do immense good, but Colonel Malleson did not understand what all this meant, and with the departure of Taylor there was an almost immediate drop in circulation. It is my misfortune, I suppose, that I must either do things in my own way or do no good at all, and a Board of Directors was to me a thing impossible—worse than going to school again. The capital of the Company was rapidly vanishing, and I prepared, with the assistance of a firm of paper-makers, to rescue *St Stephen's* from impending wreck.

Meanwhile the partly printed sheets part of the business was progressing famously with the subsidy of £20 a week from Mr Charsley, when suddenly, after the eighth week, that payment was stopped.

It is a strange story, but Mr Charsley had gone quite out of his depth in the matter of investments on the strength of the very large income that had fallen to him as the purchaser of half the reversion in a life estate. He bought Stoke Park and had the big house magnificently got up for a club. Maple's bill alone was £4000, and another £4000 was spent on pictures and decorations. A course was laid out for steeplechasing and trotting, and Lord Charles Ker was to manage it. Captain Percy Smith was manager of the club, and he got it all into most perfect order—it was, in fact, an ideal place. Then Mr Charsley launched out and bought another big estate for some £180,000, and on the top of all this he found that the tenant of the life estate, half of whose income he regularly drew, refused to have his life insured, and for that reason there

PHIL MAY SAILED FOR AUSTRALIA ON WEDNESDAY THIS WEEK

From "St. Stephen's Review," November 14, 1885

was no way by which he could capitalise his part of the income.

Probably there are insurance companies nowadays who would have accommodated him, but there were none at that time, and so, despite his £30,000 a year, he had quite overstepped the mark.

The sequel was curious. I had dined at the Stoke Park Club one evening and gone back to town. Percy Smith had seen that all was well and exactly to his mind. He is a man of very nice taste, and had taken great care over every detail. He went back the next morning to resume his duties, when, to his horror and amazement, he found the house absolutely gutted, with no stick of furniture or anything else remaining in it. What wonder that he could not believe his eyes and sat down half weeping in despair.

The truth was that Mr Charsley, alarmed by his liabilities, had requested Messrs Maple to send down and repossess themselves of all the furniture, and also to take the pictures and everything else away. Twenty or more furniture vans were sent down at night and this most portentous midnight flitting was effected. The race meeting which was brought off there the following week resolved itself into a ramping affair of the very worst sort ; and so ended the Stoke Park Club, and so ended Mr Charsley's subsidy of £20 a week for the partly printed sheets, which was to have gone on for a year and lasted only eight weeks.

Thus we were left with contracts to supply close on fifty papers with these sheets—contracts which were designedly losing ones so as to undercut all rivals, and I suppose the attempt to do such a thing in such a way deserved to fail. I can truly declare, however, that I had no sort of idea that it would ever bring me personal profit. All I was after was to get control of public opinion and defeat the Gladstonians.

The worst blow of all, however, came when Phil May told me in October, 1885, that he had received an offer of £30 a week for three years to go out to New South Wales to

work on *The Sydney Bulletin*. He was making about £10 a week out of us, and we could afford no more, for at that time the British public did not fully appreciate Phil May. I told him that, in my judgment, if he went to Australia he might be forgotten, and that there was no place like London to get good work appreciated; but there were other reasons besides the pecuniary inducement which caused him to go; and so much did I think of him that we gave up all the ground floor of the office—three rooms—to a view of his original drawings, during two days, and invited all the Press.

It will never do to fill up this book with illustrations, but I must needs give one, which is the last Phil May did for *St Stephen's Review* before he left for Sydney. It was published on 14th November 1885, and he sailed on the Wednesday in that week.

It is needless to say how much life had gone out of the paper after the departure of Phil May—and for three years too. It shows something for our vitality that we survived those three years.

It would be unedifying here to give the details of how I retrieved *St Stephen's Review* from the Company that should have been so big and was so little. At this juncture the £1 shareholders gave no trouble, but there were seven different sets of solicitors to be finally dealt with, and all in one room at the same time. It seems like a dream now that such an ordeal could have been gone through, but it was, and the paper slid imperceptibly into the ownership of another company, leaving me once more clear of all interference.

CHAPTER XXVIII

The First Eclipse Stakes—Scenes from the Irish Rebellion—Percy Reeve—*The Taming of the Shrew*—The Election our Zenith—Great Days—Col. McMurdo—The Delagoa Bay Railway—Resignation of Lord Randolph—Spiritualism and Charles Peace—The Middlesex Magistrates libelled—A Crown Prosecution—I visit America—The Appalachian Mine—Racing in the States—Hanover—James R. Keene—Leonard Jerome—A Thirsty Day—Return to England

ON 24th July 1886 we published a big cartoon representing on the top half Lord Salisbury eclipsing Gladstone in the skies, and Minting beating St Gatien and Bendigo for the First Eclipse Stakes. This is a fairly good object lesson in the folly of prophesying before you know, but as the paper came out on a Thursday and the race was not run until Friday it did not so much matter. Minting sprung a curb before the day and was unable to start or he would no doubt have verified Tom Merry's cartoon.

In this year we had made a good fight, politically, by digging up Musgrave's *History of the Irish Rebellion of* 1798 and reproducing Cruikshank's blood-curdling delineations of the horrible scenes. These, with half-a-page of the letterpress to each, made a startling series during eight weeks, and then were published in a collected form, with portraits of Mr Gladstone and Mr Parnell on the front page—"William Ewart Gladstone and Charles Stewart Parnell—the Separatist leaders of 1886. What the Irish Loyalists have to expect if these leaders triumph."

Over 500,000 of this collected series were sold in the streets of London at a penny each. The rush of itinerant vendors into the office I shall never forget. They seemed

like sacking the premises, and certainly a good many got away with copies for which they had not paid—but what matter? We were on the fighting lay, and those Cruikshank horrors thrilled the public.

I never was what is called a politician in these days, when politicians are paid, but I had and have in my inmost soul certain fixed views, which were never so well expressed as by Disraeli, and I sent out those startling sheets not for any other reason than to show the Irish question in its true and always abiding light.

Of all the staff of *St Stephen's Review* little Percy Reeve was the nearest akin to me in thought, sentiment and methods of using the English language. We were very different, as it might seem, for he was a musician whose work was perfect, with never a touch of commonplace. He never made himself a *persona grata* to the higher powers, so that he gained no great publicity, but his knowledge of music in every detail was complete, his genius was—to me at any rate—obvious, and the fullest sympathy was in his every composition, whether it were grave or gay. Poor little chap! There have been few funerals that I have attended with more real sorrow. And yet—to strike another chord—I cannot but remember being with him at a performance of *The Taming of the Shrew* and we supped afterwards at the Garrick Club, where we met Irving and—I think—Beerbohm Tree. Anyhow, we remained there some time, and walked home to Victoria Street—we both lived in the same building.

It was nearly 2 A.M. and, as we passed Buckingham Palace, Percy Reeve began to think that Shakespeare was a wonderful man and that he alone knew how women should be managed. He held forth to me on this point and I fully agreed—or seemed to agree—with him. So we went home, and Mrs Reeve, who is one of the best in the world, had, of course, no idea of being "tamed," neither had my good lady—though I must admit that such an enterprise never entered into my wildest imagination.

The dissolution of Parliament, which came along on 25th June 1886, in consequence of the first Home Rule Bill, brought *St Stephen's Review* to the zenith of its prosperity. We were never doing less than 10,000 a week of the paper, and as for the cartoons, they went by hundreds of thousands. Tom Merry could not print them fast enough, and other lithograph firms had to assist. Those cartoons were rough and ready—vulgar if you like—such as Gladstone being kicked into the air by Liberal Unionists: "The wild mob's million feet will kick you from your place"; Gladstone as Stiggins being ducked in the horse trough by old Weller (John Bright), and other such cartoons all through that exciting time, when I personally felt that we were doing National and Imperial service by helping to break up the Gladstone Government. It was worth anything to make an end of them, and ended they were when 316 Conservatives and 76 Liberal Unionists were elected as against only 192 Gladstonians and 86 Parnellites.

Naturally Gladstone resigned and Lord Salisbury took office, Lord Randolph leading the House of Commons. Those were great days, and though I did not see my way at the moment to go into Parliament, for which I had long been on the list of candidates, all seemed to be working right that way.

What I mean is that I would never have contested a seat unless at my own expense, and I venture to think that any member who has had his expenses paid for him by a party or a trade union is as bad as a voter who has sold his vote.

Before this time I had made the acquaintance of Colonel McMurdo, an American, who was a great man, whatever his financial methods may have been. It was he who first exploited the gold possibilities of the Transvaal and brought out the Balkis Company, in the promotion of which Albert Grant had some share. Gwyn Owen, a Welsh Nonconformist minister—if I remember rightly—

had come back from the Transvaal with the Balkis proposition in his pocket. They had not struck the right place in the Transvaal, as it happened, but McMurdo foresaw the prospects of the whole country and it was he who obtained the concession for the Delagoa Bay Railway from the Portuguese Government.

This railway was all but completed when McMurdo died suddenly, and, as may be remembered, the Portuguese thereupon tried to evade their liabilities.

Mrs McMurdo, however, had considerable interest with the American Government, and an arbitration case resulted which lasted over many years. Meanwhile the late Colonel's managing clerk had married the widow, and obtained good appointments in the American Consular Service. The arbitration dragged on until the good lady died, and, I think, there was no profit in the award to her then disconsolate husband, but he has since become an American ambassador, unless I am greatly mistaken.

It is indeed strange to think now what the Transvaal was in the eighties before the gold had been discovered, and what events have happened consequent on that discovery. *Effodiuntur opes irritamenta Malorum*, as we used to read in Latin text-books, and no greater truth was ever enunciated. Still, all was for the best. The Boers would still have been a pastoral race, living happily—no doubt—on the land, but men like General Botha and General Smuts would have lived and died without any opportunity to develop their talents. Yes, I suppose it has been all for the best, and yet, had there been no Delagoa Bay Railway Mr Winston Churchill would never have escaped from the Transvaal. That gives food for thought.

The return of Lord Salisbury's Government in absolute unassailable strength was bad business for *St Stephen's Review*. We were nothing if not a fighting paper, and there remained nothing to fight. Lord Randolph resigned his office at the end of that year and on 1st January 1887

I committed the paper to support of him, but in no sense as an opponent of Lord Salisbury. The election had been grand, and one of our cartoons represented the eighteen members for Kent, all Unionists. All seemed to be going well, except for a fighting paper with convictions such as mine were and still are. For a while the aftermath of political excitement lasted, and even on 26th March 1887 a cartoon of Messrs Gladstone and Parnell in the pillory, with Sir William Harcourt in the stocks, below them, proved very popular. Another, on 9th April 1887, showed the Gladstonians being taken to the Tower, through the Traitors' Gate. Many other very striking cartoons were brought out, but the Opposition was too feeble to be worthy of them, and the palmy days of the paper seemed to have ended. It had been a desperately strenuous life so far, to combine responsibility for finance, politics and editorial work with business management which was more or less hopeless. Once I was induced by Tasker to attend a spiritualistic séance of his own in one of the rooms of the office. There were three or four persons present besides myself and Tasker, and after the table had dashed about in ridiculous fashion it rapped out the letters spelling CHARLES PEACE, whereupon its evolutions became so violent that its legs were broken and the séance came to an end. Naturally I thought at the time that the show was humbug, but later on those other men all proved to be " undesirables," and it seemed really curious that Charles Peace should have come into such congenial society. Neither Tasker nor myself had any suspicion of any of them at the time.

In the spring of 1887 some one of our contributors—I think it was William Mackay—took the Middlesex Magistrates to task for licensing the Alhambra and refusing the Empire's licence. The innuendo in the paragraph was not obscure, and unfortunately contained the undoubted substratum of truth which served to explain the yearly renewals for so long of the licence of the old Argyle Rooms.

Nothing was heard of the matter for a while, but on Valentine's Day I received a portentous document:

Victoria

By the Grace of God—

To William Cate and Edward Tarry greeting—

These are to command you, etc., etc.

I had never seen a writ of the sort and at first took it as somebody's practical joke; but it soon transpired that a Crown prosecution for libel on behalf of the Magistrates had been instituted, and our printer and the cashier, who was nominally publisher, were the defendants. Poor old Cate, who had long ceased to take any active part in his printing business and lived happily down the Thames, fishing, lost two stone in weight from anxiety before the trial. The late Mr John Hollingshead, and others whom I could name, called on me from time to time after this, with strange stories about Middlesex Magistrates, but always when asked if they would give evidence to that effect they dried up; and it became evident that we could not fight the case, and must get out of it by apologies.

I was not joined in the action, and in May that year I sailed for New York on the old *Etruria*, then a new ship. I had a very good time in America except when I spent a fortnight at the Appalachian mine in North Carolina, and even there the novelty was very interesting, though there was nothing but unfiltered water to drink and very little indeed to eat. To quote my own words written at the time:

Meat there is none. A lamb is killed for us as an experiment, and the event is regarded as one of thrilling interest, but though it is forthwith put down the mine to keep, it goes wrong the very next day, and there is an end of it. No such thing as ice exists; the flies swarm in millions, and wood-ticks fasten on our legs and bloat their bodies on our blood; "jiggers" also abound and find the bare feet of the niggers a happy hunting ground. Butter is purely liquid and wholly abominable; and o' nights, what time we sit out of doors, clad but in two garments, and play whist, consisting at last of double dummy, between me and the Colonel,

hideous and horrid buzzing things surround our lamp, and a whip-poor-will commences with unceasing regularity to repeat his maddening strain in our immediate vicinity. . . . A terrible bird is the whip-poor-will; let us be thankful we in England know him not.

I learned enough about gold-mining in that fortnight to understand that it is no game for amateurs. Thus, although I learned how to pan ore and never failed to get a good show of gold in this way, sometimes enough to string right round the pan, yet when that same class of quartz was milled and washed over the plates never a trace of gold did it leave behind. This, I suppose, was the fault of the reduction officer, who was a mere boy fresh from college, but I soon saw that between the existence of gold in quartz and the extracting it in large quantities there is a vast deal of practical knowledge wanted, and I repaired to New York again to see racing and horses, which I did understand.

Before going to New York I had left the racing columns of *St Stephen's Review* to Lord Marcus Beresford, who most kindly took charge, and no man has ever written better stuff than he used to do—as can well be imagined. More than that, we arranged then that we should start the International Horse Agency and Exchange, and I took out a big list of mares, most of which were Hume-Webster's, to offer to American breeders. The business did not come to anything at that time, and Lord Marcus later on went his way and I mine, but there was never any divergence of opinion. Only the first effort fell flat, and did not seem worth following up.

Bread cast upon the waters, however, is found after many days, and it was during that visit to America in 1887 that I first met Mr James R. Keene, who was temporarily down on his luck from some Wall Street disasters. I had been to a Brooklyn meeting, and in *St Stephen's* of 30th July 1887, I wrote :

The big race, the Brookdale Handicap, was the important one of the day, and at last I saw what I at once took to be a real

good horse. This was a chestnut three-year-old, with three white legs and of rare quality, though perhaps without the commanding length and liberty of an absolutely first-class English horse. He was somewhat after the style of Bend Or, and knowing absolutely nothing of the supposed merits and relative form of the American horses, I wrote Col. Buck the same night: "I have seen one horse to-day which, if I mistake not, is really in the first class."

This horse was the three-year-old Hanover, whom I have learned more of since, having seen him win two more races, and despite the low opinion I formed of American horses generally, I should not have the smallest hesitation in backing Hanover for our St Leger this year, were he engaged and in England.

That, in its way, was almost equal to my finding Phil May, for Hanover, later on, proved to be the leading stallion in the States for four or five years and his blood has come to be greatly valued in this country through Orby, who is out of a Hanover mare.

I must not dawdle over these reminiscences of America, but I must give just a touch of what happened on Decoration Day at Jerome Park in 1887, then opened for racing once more, but since then, I believe, built over. Here is an extract of what I wrote at the time:

But now to meet Mr Keene on the Quarter Stretch—or whatever they call it—and see Kingston.

Before this meeting is effected, I am somehow brought into contact with a kindly and jovial gentleman, of between fifty and sixty, who remarks, without more ado: "You look as though you wanted a drink. Come with me." A drink, after the long wait on the stand, was just what one did want, so it needed no introduction to make me accompany this good Samaritan. We passed into a small room below the judge's box, and there were sundry and agreeable-looking bottles of which we partook, with much mutual good-fellowship. Suddenly I espied the name on the Member's Pass of my host. It was *Leonard Jerome*.

I had already noticed that the design on the back of the race card of the day was taken from one of *St Stephen's* St Leger cartoons, in which Lord Randolph was represented as winning, and I found Mr Jerome greatly pleased to meet someone who supported his son-in-law politically by cartoons and otherwise—indeed I know not what dinners at the Union Club and other

functions were not immediately ordered to be arranged, and Colonel Buck, who had joined us, undertook to bring all the choice souls within reach.

The above incident of my chance meeting with Lady Randolph's father is a good deal more interesting than anything I could write about the Appalachian mine. I returned to England on the old *Servia*, and among the passengers were Millicent Duchess of Sutherland and the late Duke. They were then on their wedding tour, and as it was Jubilee year, he presided at a celebration in the saloon of the steamer, at which the British passengers entertained the American, and as the British numbered only about twenty and the Americans were coming over in hundreds the entertainment was somewhat costly when divided up among the twenty.

I liked America well, but I was glad to get back to this old country, for I shall always remember that the first sight that greeted me in the hall of the Hoffman House, when I arrived there on a Sunday morning, was a large portrait of Mr Gladstone, and the next thing I saw was a printed placard which intimated that the committee for the reception of the Hon. William O'Brien was sitting in Room—I forget the number. That surely was an unpleasant welcome. I find that I wrote : " One cannot help feeling rejoiced at the knowledge that certain New York aldermen are undergoing long terms of imprisonment —of course they are Irishmen."

I may quote a little further, thus :

Having arrived at the Hoffman House and paid 2½ dollars for what in London would be a 1s. 6d. fare, the joy of drink deferred suggests that it were better to have a bath before an internal application of liquid. The water of the dock had, of course, not served for bathing purposes on board ship that morning. . . . The time arrived when it was expedient to interview the barman. It was a thrilling moment, and on finding that the bar was not open, the next thing was to hurry into one of the numerous coffee-rooms and ask a waiter what was "the best long drink" he could recommend. The expectation of that drink and the dream of the ice it would contain will remain while life lasts—so will the blank

horror which supervened, when the waiter, with his accursed German accent, replied: "No drink, sir, on Sunday. It is the law."

As Virgil sometimes has it, *Obstupui, steterantque comæ, vox faucibus hæsit*; I had literally *never* for one single day since I could remember gone without my drink, and here it was only eight o'clock in the morning, the weather already sweltering, and—oh! it was too awful!—I seized a glass of iced water, drank it and shuddered. "This," said I to the waiter, "is what you call a free country! Thank God I do not live under a republic!" He only grinned and . . . There is no exaggeration in what I have stated, and the unfortunate inhabitants of New York are groaning under the yoke—or solacing themselves by crossing the river on Sundays into New Jersey, where no such idiocy prevails. There was nothing for it, in the instance under notice, but to grin and bear it, for one could not well present letters of introduction on a Sunday and ask for drink.

To sit outside in Madison Square, a stranger, and thirsty in a dry land, was melancholy indeed; and then, in sheer bitterness of despair, to lunch off "Cocoa and Clam Fritters" was an experience over which oceans of agony still seem to roll. Then, too, the insulting spectacle of Mr Gladstone's photograph in the hall—ah, the whole thing was bitter indeed. . . . [A visit to the Central Park . . .] One could bear the heat no longer and so returned, incontinently drinking lemonade *en route*, trying pure Apollinaris, by way of a change, at the hotel; then quaffing beakers of ginger ale; and finally, after hearing an utterly Scotch sermon by the Rev. Doctor Taylor of the Tabernacle, crowning the terrors of the day with foaming goblets of sarsaparilla, than which nothing more nauseous can be imagined. Verily these New York people do well to point to their statue of "Liberty enlightening the nations." No more remarkable irony could be conceived. Liberty may look very fine there in the bay, and, like the moon in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, she may shine "with a good grace," but since she failed to enlighten me as to where in New York I could procure one of the necessities of life—why, then I say she is but a make-believe Liberty, after all, and that New York has simply set up an idol which has just the same right to its title, and no more than had Starveling when he says in the play:

> "This Lantern doth the horned Moon present,
> And I the Man in the Moon do seem to be."

Such was my first experience of New York, but it is only fair to add that I was all right by the next Sunday,

Stephen Fiske having seen to it that I was an honorary member of the Lyric Club. The teetotal madness of New York which I found in full blast was only temporary, and the obnoxious rule was rescinded a few weeks later, but first impressions are seldom quite dispelled, and certainly this one of mine has never been.

CHAPTER XXIX

Scintillæ Juris—First Impression of Mr Justice Darling—I assist at his First Election—The Consequences—Contempt of Court—Bradlaugh and H. H. Asquith—Admonition of Mr Justice Hawkins—Result of the Crown Prosecution—Further Troubles—Prosecuted at Bow Street and the Old Bailey for Libel—Found Guilty—The Conviction quashed—Civil Action for the same Libel—Verdict that it is no Libel at all—Costs irrecoverable—£1500 sacrificed

I FORGET exactly when it was, but it must have been in the early eighties when I was in Court at Westminster and heard a very youthful-looking junior counsel conducting a case with what seemed to me quite remarkable ability. The result was that when I was asked a week or two later by the late C. E. Goldring (solicitor) if I could recommend any young counsel, other than myself, as likely to do justice to a brief, I replied that there was one whom I had recently heard, and his name was Darling. Whether the present Mr Justice Darling was briefed accordingly I forget, but my recommendation was certainly given.

Later on I was mixed up with this same Mr Darling in a manner that had for me unfortunate results. In the beginning of 1888, there had arisen a question about the right of public meeting in Trafalgar Square. Various riots had followed, and the Opposition was attacking Lord Salisbury's Government on the subject. A man named Peters had received a cheque for £25 from Lord Salisbury for some perfectly legitimate object, and Mr Bradlaugh happened to hear of this payment. He thereupon publicly declared that Lord Salisbury had given Peters £25 to assist in promoting the Trafalgar Square riots, so as to bring the Opposition into disrepute,

and on these statements being published, Peters commenced an action for libel against Bradlaugh.

At that time there was a vacancy for the Deptford Constituency, and Darling was the Unionist candidate against Evelyn, a very popular local candidate. Bradlaugh bestirred himself very energetically over this election, and kept repeating again and again his story about Lord Salisbury having given £25 to promote riots, and how he could bring his lordship to book in twenty-four hours if the law's delays were dispensed with.

This being the state of affairs, there came to me, on the afternoon of 22nd February 1888, two accredited Unionist agents from Deptford with the information that, so far from being able to bring Lord Salisbury to book in twenty-four hours, Bradlaugh would next day apply in chambers for a month's extension of time to deliver his defence in the action which Peters had brought against him. I was asked to publish these facts in our issue which was just about to go to press, and send down several thousand copies for distribution at the docks and in the constituency generally. I verified the correctness of the story and then wrote the following, which was published next day :—

The obvious insincerity of Mr Bradlaugh . . . is proved by the fact that an action for libel has been brought against Mr Bradlaugh by Mr Peters, which will raise the identical issue so loudly clamoured for by Mr Bradlaugh. Of course it will not give Mr Bradlaugh so good an advertisement as he desires, but it will prove whether he committed perjury or not.

It will hardly be credited by those who are aware of Mr Bradlaugh's ostensibly raging desire to clear his character from the imputation of perjury, that at this very moment he is privately asking for time as he is not prepared to defend himself. On this very day (Thursday) Mr Bradlaugh's solicitors will appear before Master Manley Smith in Chambers, craving a month's extension of the period in which their client is to deliver his defence in the action brought against him by Mr Peters, who, he declared, received Lord Salisbury's cheque. This is a pretty state of things truly. The man who has publicly alleged on numerous occasions that he can at any time within twenty-four hours prove his assertion as to Lord Salisbury's cheque, to be at one and the same time roaring

the House of Commons down in his pretended desire for immediate enquiry, and seeking in secret, by legal quibbles, to evade inquiry for another month.

Nor is this the first similar step Mr Bradlaugh has taken in this action. It was brought in the Lord Mayor's court in the first instance, where it would have come to a speedy issue, but his solicitors artfully prevented this by getting the same Master Manley Smith to remove it by *certiorari* to the High Courts, and, even before that, they had obtained seven days' extension of time for delivering defence. Mr Justice Field, on being appealed to, did not reverse the order, but advised the parties to bring the case on as quickly as possible. Now Mr Bradlaugh is trying for another month's time, and Mr Peters meanwhile rests under the imputation of having received Lord Salisbury's cheque to promote Trafalgar Square meetings. The thing is monstrous; more especially as Mr Bradlaugh is acting not merely for self-advertisement, but to keep an accusation which he knows to be false, as long as possible without legal refutation, so that the public mind may be poisoned by it and the impending elections influenced. It is to be hoped Master Manley Smith has too much sense of the dignity of his position to fall in with Mr Bradlaugh's views.

The above was written very hastily, as the paper was going to press; but I knew the facts were correctly stated, and being circulated broadcast in Deptford next day it produced a strong revulsion against Mr Bradlaugh and the campaign of calumny which he had been conducting throughout the constituency. Darling got in, and I got thanked for what I had done. So far, so good.

Now we come to the other side of the picture. The enemy had been stung to the quick by what had happened, and not long afterwards I was summoned to appear in the Court of Queen's Bench to answer for Contempt of Court, and the leader in the proceedings against me was no other than Mr H. H. Asquith! I was supposed to have interfered with the course of justice, by commenting as I had done on the case of Peters *v.* Bradlaugh which was *sub judice*.

In the first instance we retained Sir Robert Finlay as leader and had a conference with him. He will remember it, I have no doubt, for he was much amused over the situation; but for some reason his engagements did

not permit him to take the brief, and we secured another leader whose very name I have, at this distance of time, forgotten, but he was a good man, and made a brave show throughout the whole of one day before Manisty and Hawkins, JJ. Now the latter of these was a bitter old Radical, and it was easy to see we were in for trouble. The first day's proceedings resulted in a verbatim report of all my observations about Bradlaugh being published in *The Times* and the other dailies, but at the close of that first day Mr Justice Manisty had said to my counsel: "I think, Mr ——, you had better consider before to-morrow's sitting, what course you will pursue."

This meant, of course, that we had to climb down and cease fighting. I made an affidavit in the morning, apologising to the Court, and saying I had never intended to interfere with the course of justice, but simply to assist at the Deptford election. This latter statement was injudicious, for it enraged Mr Justice Hawkins, and then, after my counsel had said all he could for me, and Mr Asquith had added that there was no desire on the part of Mr Bradlaugh for extreme measures, I sat down in the well of the court to await the result: and a somewhat ominous incident had occurred as I was going to the court that morning, for as I got into an omnibus at Charing Cross, the conductor shouted lustily: "Holloway —Holloway!"

For more than twenty minutes the two judges conferred, and I could see from his expression that if Sir Henry Hawkins could have had his way, to Holloway I should have gone: but Mr Justice Manisty was of milder mood, and he was the senior judge: so at last they settled it and proceeded to pronounce sentence. Manisty had the first go, and as I sat watching him speak, he said: "It is usual to stand up on these occasions"—so up I stood, like a boy at school, and begged pardon for my oversight. Then he went on for a few minutes on the vital importance of justice being done between parties, and the iniquity of in any way interfering with this.

Meanwhile I had many friends in court who were immensely entertained by my really absurd position. Mr Justice Manisty concluded by saying that I was to be fined £20 and costs. This meant something considerably over £200 in all.

Then Mr Justice Hawkins began, and having been baulked of his Holloway vengeance, he let out as best he could with words. I thought at once the best way to meet this was to assume a look of absolute stupidity and stare full in his face all the time without showing any semblance of noticing a word he said. This I did throughout fully twenty minutes, and I could see that he became more and more angry at my absolutely impassive condition. "The form of his countenance changed" and he heaped words on words of condemnation, but I continued to look vacantly at him without the slightest external indication that I even heard, still less understood what he was talking about.

It was a somewhat subtle method of getting a bit of my own back, but I know very well it drove right home.

All this possesses no small interest inasmuch as it is so intimately concerned with the first advances in the career of Mr Justice Darling, who is generally regarded as the best judge on the Bench at the present time. I was giving evidence before him in a horse case three or four years ago, and I wondered then whether he remembered these things.

Commenting on the Contempt proceedings, *The Observer*, 26th March 1888, said:

Mr Peters, it will be remembered, commenced his action against Mr Bradlaugh in the Mayor's Court. The defendant had succeeded in removing it into the High Court, and applied to Mr Manley Smith for a month's time to plead. At this period the paragraphs complained of appeared. They contrasted, and unsparingly commented on, the steps Mr Bradlaugh was then taking and his previous demand in the House of Commons for immediate inquiry into his dispute with Lord Salisbury. The editor avowed the authorship, and stated that he wrote with no intention of reflecting on the Court or of prejudicing the defendant in the action; his

object was to reply to the insinuations made against Lord Salisbury and the Conservative Party, and incidentally to aid the latter in the Deptford election. He has been duly fined, and there the matter ends, so far as *St Stephen's Review* is concerned.

It remains to be added that when the Peters *v.* Bradlaugh case came on for trial Bradlaugh admitted in the witness-box that he had no defence, apologised for what he had said about Lord Salisbury's cheque, and the jury assessed the damages he had to pay at £300. This, with the costs, was promptly subscribed by his party, and I wrote, on 28th April 1888 :

> It is not a point on which we care to dwell, but we may be pardoned for just adverting to it. Our case with Mr Bradlaugh cost about £200. No one disputes that we acted for the Conservative Party at Deptford—yet we might have lain in Holloway, or have been sold up or otherwise ruined, and not a farthing would have come from the Conservative Party. There would have been letters of sympathy—oh dear, yes !—and lots of offers to mention the matter to others, but no hard cash. It is for this reason that we are amused when foolish persons talk of *St Stephen's Review* being subsidised by the Conservative Party. We are, fortunately, able to pay our own fines, even when incurred for and on behalf of the party. It is better that it should be so.

That was an end of the matter save that Lord Salisbury wrote me a letter saying that he fully understood what my motives had been and that the opinion expressed by the judges was not generally approved.

I should add, however, that the Crown prosecution instituted before I went to America in 1887 against our printer and publisher, for libelling the Middlesex Magistrates, had ended somewhat farcically some time before this Contempt of Court case. The Attorney-General and the Solicitor-General had both appeared to support the dignity of the Crown, and the two defendants, of course, were on view, the printer, Cate, being a portly old gentleman of considerable size, and the publisher, Tairy, on a smaller scale.

Mr Attorney, after some preliminary observations as to

the importance of keeping pure the fount of justice, proceeded to state that the defendants, it was found, were not personally responsible for the libel, and had not even been cognisant of it until it was brought to their notice. They had expressed their regret that it should have appeared in a paper to which their names were attached, and they had undertaken to exercise great care in future to prevent any recurrence of such an offence. In the circumstances it was not proposed to offer any evidence.

The defendants were accordingly discharged, and some of the Middlesex Magistrates breathed more freely.

This conclusion did not suit the Opposition Press at all, and Mr W. T. Stead published a diatribe against it in *The Pall Mall Gazette*. Why, he asked, had the editor of *St Stephen's Review* not been prosecuted instead of these two harmless persons, against whom no evidence could be offered?

It was well known, he continued, that the editor had been sent by the Government to America under the pretext of buying horses there, but really to be out of the way!

Of course, this statement was totally devoid of foundation, but it mattered not to me.

Legal troubles continued to accumulate, for while I was in court over the Bradlaugh business, the sub-editor sent the paper to press with the seeds of further trouble in it. This was the issue of 24th March 1888, and it contained a paragraph in reference to a so-called "London Anti-coercion and Home Rule Committee," which, it said:

> consists of some half-dozen gabblers who infest Hyde Park, Mile End waste, the arches beneath St Pancras Station and Clerkenwell Green at various times during Sunday; make illiterate, lying and abusive speeches, and of course go round with the hat. . . . These sham delegates are simply persons who fell out with hard—and honest—work many years ago and have never made up the quarrel yet. Neither will they, while they have a wife or a mother to keep them in "boozy" idleness, and can find crowds of gaping idiots willing to subscribe their hard-earned shillings and pence to find them in luxuries.

In an early part of the paragraph they were described as " profit-seeking itinerant agitators " and " Hyde Park plunderers of the poor." Two of them were mentioned by name.

It was a stupid thing to give such people the chance of an advertisement, for we had plenty of rich enemies ready to help them or anyone else to attack us. Thus it happened that by some mysterious means the Attorney-General's fiat was obtained for the prosecution of the editor, proprietors, publishers and printers of *St Stephen's Review*, and on this large order, fifteen or sixteen defendants were proceeded against. The paper was owned by a limited company which never had any shareholders except the original seven clerks who signed for a share each, for the formality of registration. These seven, or such of them as could be found, were prosecuted. Messrs Judd & Co., the printers, were in similar case, and the directors of their company were included. One of these was Mr James Judd, a highly reputable Common Council man, and his indignation at the fate that had befallen him was really amusing. " Nothing," he cried, " will induce me to go and stand where criminals have stood ! "

The first proceedings were at Bow Street. Mr Bowen Rowlands, Q.C., appeared for us. and Mr Besley for Messrs Judd. The prosecutors were supported by numerous rich Radicals, prominent among whom was Mr Dadabhai Naoraji. The Rev. Stuart Headlam also assisted them with evidence, and altogether we were up against a strange crowd. Now, to justify a libel in criminal proceedings you have to prove not merely that it was published for the public benefit, but that every word of it is true. One of the men whom we had mentioned proved to be a teetotaller, and the word " boozy " as applied to him was indefensible. Therefore, with him we effected an amicable settlement. The other man went on, and at Bow Street such a defence as justification is not gone into. We were formally committed for trial at the Old Bailey, and Mr Judd's horror on hearing this was such that, quite

contrary to his custom, he went to Ascot races when the trial came on, as it provokingly did, during Ascot week. More than that, Mr Judd's absence was never discovered, his counsel, Mr Besley, being ready with some excuse on the few occasions when the Recorder inquired why Mr Judd was not in court.

The case lasted a day and a half, and the proceedings were really laughable. The complainant appeared in a large green tie to advertise his "all-for-Ireland" politics, and various lights of Radicalism gave more or less foolish evidence. Mr Stuart Headlam was closely questioned as to his own political tenets, and whether he had not described landlords as robbers. Altogether, it seemed that we were going to have pretty nearly a walk-over, and the Recorder, Sir Thomas Chambers, summed up so utterly in our favour, that the result was—so I thought—a foregone conclusion.

Then the jury considered their verdict, and they did not take a long time about it. The foreman was asked, in the usual way, the decision—and my name being alphabetically first, I now heard the momentous question:

WILLIAM ALLISON,
Guilty or not guilty?

"Guilty!" was the reply.

Well, this was rather a "shocker," being so completely unexpected; but before I had time to think about it they had run down the whole list of other defendants and pronounced every one to be "guilty."

The Recorder hardly concealed his astonishment at the verdict, and he immediately discharged us all on our own recognisances to come up for judgment when called on.

This, of course, amounted to nothing, or, as you might say, a farthing damages in a civil case. I think the jury must have resented the Recorder's summing up so strongly in our favour: but, be that as it may, our case was the last criminal libel ever tried under the law as it then was,

for an amending Act was passed soon afterwards and no such scandalous use of legal processes would now be possible.

As it was, the conviction was subsequently quashed, for though I did not care two straws about it, Mr James Judd could not endure to think of himself as a convicted criminal; so he set the law in motion once more, and it was held by the Court of Crown Cases Reserved that the Attorney-General's Fiat for the Prosecution was bad, as being too indefinite. The judges were unanimous on this point as regards the terms, "proprietors, printers and publishers," but there was a division of opinion as to whether "the editor" was not sufficiently specific. Three judges against two decided that it was not, and so even I was cleared.

All would now have been well, but the Messrs Judd, anxious to carry the war into the enemy's camp, went for the complainant and made him bankrupt for their costs. His host of Radical supporters were ready with any amount of money for the attack on us, but not with a farthing that might find its way to us, so no costs were forthcoming.

And then a worse thing happened. An action was started in the Civil Courts against us for the same libel. I knew a certain amount about law, but it was a revelation to me that such a process was possible, after the criminal one had been quashed; but there was no mistake about it, and as the plaintiff was a bankrupt, with assets *nil*, we applied in chambers for security for costs, and got an order accordingly.

This order, however, was reversed on appeal, as it was contended that libel was a personal offence, and a man should not be debarred from redress by his poverty. So we were up to be shot at once more by a man of straw, supported by the same Radical capitalists as before. The case came on before Baron Huddlestone, and the plaintiff had a bad time of it, as also had his backers. He was a milk-dealer, and in answer to Interrogatories

had furnished the names and addresses of about fifty people who, he said, had ceased to deal with him in consequence of the libel. We sent round to all these and, without exception, they all denied the truth of the plaintiff's particulars. The plaintiff again wore a green tie, but Baron Huddlestone made short work of him. It was left to the jury whether the statements complained of were a libel at all, and if so whether we had justified them. The jury, without leaving the box, found that there was no libel, and there was judgment for the defendants, with costs.

It is needless to say that not a farthing of costs was ever recovered from the plaintiff, and we had been pursued in this manner for fully a year and a half for what the jury ultimately decided was not a libel at all. Our own expenses amounted to fully £1500, and it was particularly aggravating that constant newspaper reports led to the idea that we were always libelling people, whereas it was the same old bogus case all the way through. Mr Akers Douglas more than once, when I used to go to Downing Street to hear any scraps of news, said to me: "Surely you must be rather indiscreet to be involved in so many libel cases!"

This interminable case ended at last, however, and for a while there was respite from legal troubles.

CHAPTER XXX

Recollections of Romano's—"The Squire" and his Satellites—Colonel North's Fancy Dress Ball—Return of Phil May—Splendid Work—Phil May at his Best—A great Christmas Number—Phil May's Methods—Invention of *The Parson and the Painter*—The Hansard Union Fight—An Unsought-for Combat—How it was fought—*Bubbles*—Horatio Bottomley, a *John Bull* Fighter—The Publishing Trade warned—*The Fire-Escape* and Parnell—The Hansard Union killing *St Stephen's* before its own Demise—I clear out

OUR office being in John Street, Adelphi, made me a regular habitué of Romano's for luncheon and so forth, in the days when it was of the rifle gallery width, and a delightful place it was. Of course I well knew all *The Sporting Times* crowd of that day, more particularly "the Shifter" and "Gubbins." The "Roman" himself was an ideal host, though always with an eye to the main chance. For example, he had been caught one day by a man who betted him an even fiver that he could see the clock at the Law Courts from the pavement just in front of the restaurant. Not one man in a hundred would believe that this can be done, but it can, and so Romano found when he stepped outside to make trial and decide the wager.

He paid the £5 and waited an opportunity. This occurred—as he thought—the next day, when he introduced the question about seeing the Law Courts clock from the pavement outside. A customer ridiculed the idea and ultimately bet an even £10 that the clock could not be seen. Romano, of course, thought the £10 already won, and they stepped out to settle the matter. There was no clock to be seen at all that day! It had been removed for repairs, and Romano had to disburse £10, to his unutterable disgust.

Romano's at that time was like the most cheery Bohemian Club, but it was spoiled for a while, later on, when "The Squire" (Abington Baird) made it the headquarters of himself and the pugilistic fraternity. I never minded this a bit for I was good friends with all of them, and they never, even in their worst moods, troubled me: but other visitors were subjected to unbearable insults from time to time. Thus, on one occasion, when Pottinger Stephens was sitting smoking a cigarette after his lunch, "The Squire" came lurching past him and snatched the cigarette out of his mouth. Of course he jumped up, as anyone would do, to forcibly resent such an outrage, and then there gathered round him three or four fighting men whom I could name. They said nothing, but, like a wise man, he sat down again. That afternoon Stephens had a Police Court summons for assault served on "The Squire," and I wrote a real scorching paragraph on the incident for our paper, which went to press the same evening, but about 10.30 P.M. I received a special message from Stephens, who knew of my intention, saying he had withdrawn the summons, and would I cut out anything I had written about the matter. "The Squire" would pay almost anything sooner than face a law court, and whatever solatium he offered was no doubt a very big one. I was very sorry, all the same, to cut out that paragraph It needed no courage to have published it, for none of the gang would ever have laid a hand on me—of that I was quite sure. Indeed the fighting men were good fellows enough, only utterly spoiled for the time being by their rich patron, who had but one redeeming merit, that he could ride fairly well on the flat. He used to get all his wine and cigars from Romano, which alone meant a very big trade, but the fact that the place was haunted by such a gang frightened the average reputable customer away from it.

In those days, too, I saw a great deal of the Savage Club. I was not a member, but my sub-editor, Tasker ("Edgar Lee"), was, and I think no one has ever

Politics for the Nursery.

IV.

OOK AT LIT-TLE RAN-DY PAN-DY!

Once he sought for su-gar can-dy—
Thinking 'twould be such a treat—
In a place called Down-ing Street
But he found, to his de-spair,
Nought but bit-ter stuff was there.
So, you see, with-out de-lay
Ran-dy Pan-dy ran a-way.
Then the oth-er boys cried out:
"Ran-dy, what are you about?
Down-ing Street is ve-ry nice;
Stay in it by our ad-vice!"
But the dis-ap-point-ed lad
Thought the place was ve-ry bad;
So in an-ger he went forth
Till he found John Tom-my North,
And with him be-gan to play
In a real-ly pleas-ant way.
Mas-ter North has loads of toys,
Which he shares with oth-er boys,
And to Ran-dy Pan-dy he
Gave them ve-ry gen'r-ous-ly
Soon we see the happy pair
Free from ev'r-y thought of care,
Both so jol-ly, both so gay,
Playing horses ev'r-y day.

But the mas-ters look as-kance
While these pu-pils jump and prance,
Play-ing horses, as they fear,
Can-not fail to cost them dear.
Work is wait-ing, close and han-dy,
Bet-ter far for Ran-dy Pan-dy!

From "St. Stephen's Review," Nov. 30, 1889

associated with the "Savages" without deriving considerable personal benefit.

All was going fairly well with the paper. In this, its latest stage, Raymond Radclyffe had joined me, as the financial editor, he taking sole charge of the business side of the paper and I of the editorial. He is a singularly able man, and we seemed fairly on the highway to fortune, for just at the end of that year, 1888, there came the glad news that Phil May had returned to Europe and was at Rome. He never thought of working for any but his first friends, and, though he was staying to study in Rome, he wrote to say he would send sketches from there regularly. This was good news indeed, for he had made a great name in Australia, where they appreciated his genius much more rapidly than did the English people.

It so happened that Colonel North was going to give a tremendous fancy dress ball at the Metropole Hotel on the 4th January 1889, and that was when the nitrate boom was in full blast. Everyone, from highest to lowest, was running after the jovial Colonel, for the nitrate companies kept coming out in rapid succession and the shares were always at two or three premium as soon as the prospectus had appeared. If you could only obtain an allotment of some of them you had nothing to do but sell, and rake in your profit. How it was all managed I have no idea, but if you had money enough to pay the application amount for whatever number of shares you wanted, and were sufficiently in favour to get some portion of them allotted, you could make your profit forthwith.

Now it occurred to me that it would be really great to have Phil May at Colonel North's ball, and I wrote to the Colonel asking him if he would stand the expense of bringing him over from Rome. He asked what that would amount to. I replied suggesting £50, which was little enough in all conscience, but Colonel North, who was not a self-advertiser, by nature, didn't think it good enough. I received that answer from him at the Junior Carlton Club, where he was surrounded by such as Lord

Randolph Churchill, Lord Abergavenny, etc., etc., and I then went to our office, where to my surprise and delight I found Phil May, who had come over on a flying visit.

That was splendid, for I soon got him an invitation to the ball, which he treated with the freedom born of irresponsibility. The whole ground floor and the whole basement of the Metropole were taken for that ball, and the whole of the champagne in the hotel was consumed.

Phil May did a splendid double-page drawing of the affair. This is now in the possession of Sir Harry North and must be worth a very large sum, but Colonel North on first sight of the paper tore it up in wrath and kicked out the old canvasser who had come to ask him how many copies he wanted. What specially annoyed him was the sketch of himself, as Henry VIII., saying: "Cost me £8000 and I can't get a drink."

It is a fact that the Colonel could not get a glass of champagne at the conclusion of the proceedings; but after thinking about what Phil May had done he saw the humour of it, and, as I told him when I met him, the "can't get a drink" sketch only illustrated his unbounded hospitality. "If," said I, "we had represented any of your guests as unable to get a drink, that would have been a very different matter." He saw the point, and he had already secured 1000 copies of the paper for the benefit of his friends. In the centre of that drawing is Colonel North with Lady Randolph Churchill, and on their right appear Lord Randolph and Mrs North. The whole thing is a glorious piece of black and white art, and any attempted description would be futile. It shows so clearly the truth of Whistler's dictum: "Black and White Art is—Phil May."

Phil May returned to Rome, where he remained some months and sent us priceless gems of his work from time to time. Then he went to Paris and had a studio there, where his series of "Life in Paris" was quite inimitable. Still, I had a very strong idea that as I had understood him from the first, so did I still understand him, better even

than he did himself, and that he would never be shown at his very best until something was written for him which would bring out his extraordinary combination of powers as both caricaturist and artist. When I say "Caricaturist," I ought, perhaps, to speak rather of his power to look at men for a minute or two and fix them in his memory. Once in the earlier days I took him to Kempton Park and pointed out all the people I wanted him to make a note of. It was pouring with rain, and he could not make a single pencil note, but he looked at those people—about twenty in number—and made a page drawing that night with every likeness strikingly good, except—as I thought—that of Colonel McMurdo, and he was recognised by a stranger in the Strand who had only, up to that time, seen the sketch in *St Stephen's*.

Well then, I thought of an idea which in my judgment would show the man in the street the very best of Phil May, of whom by this time I had become very proud. This was done by writing *Politics for the Nursery* and asking him to illustrate the letterpress. The result was really great, as I think anyone will agree who looks at the few samples that it is possible to give in this book. They are necessarily reduced to small scale, and are from *St Stephen's* itself, not from the originals.

I need not make any comment on Phil May's work in these sketches, except that I never gave any suggestion as to what I wanted. He simply had the verses to illustrate in any way he thought fit. To my mind "Master North" offering "good advice" to "Randy-Pandy" is as near perfection as we shall ever see. It was at the time when Lord Randolph was first interesting himself greatly in racing.

The strength of Phil May's line drawing is demonstrated by the way in which it has stood production from an old paper in these illustrations.

For the Christmas Number of that year Phil May did a splendid big cartoon, one of the very best things he ever did. The number was entitled *Crime*, and the idea

was to show a future condition of our country, similar to that which prevails in Russia now. This big cartoon comprised all the leading men of the day in convict's garb and doing their exercise in a prison yard. It was a wonderful success, and ought some day to be reproduced. In that number there was given a specimen "Contents Bill" of *The Star* as it was supposed to be in the terrible times that were coming. It ran thus:

EXECUTION OF BLOODY BALFOUR
THE MURDERER OF OUR BRETHREN
BROUGHT TO THE
FAGGOT AND THE FLAME
HE EXPIRES IN HORRIBLE AGONY
IRELAND NOBLY AVENGED
SCENES AT THE FUNERAL PYRE
WHAT PRICE THE TORIES NOW?
CAPTAIN COE'S FINALS

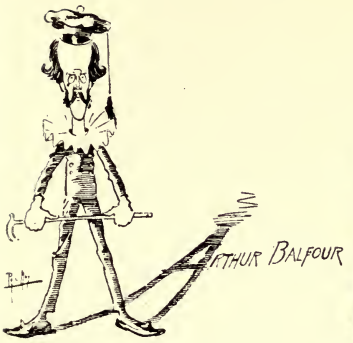
Even *The Star* was amused at this.

Certainly we ended that year very well indeed, notwithstanding the losses that had been incurred in law costs. People were beginning to appreciate Phil May at last, and we only looked forward to the time when he would return permanently to England. Some there were who scarcely realised that he had ever been away. One such was a needy old actor who used to frequent the Strand and often repair to Romano's bar in search of some kindly friend. Just before leaving England for Australia Phil May went to Romano's to say good-bye to any friends there. The waif referred to was among those present, and he simply said: "Phil, old man, lend me half-a-crown; will you?" Needless to say, his request was granted.

Now when Phil May paid his first return visit to England, after more than three years, he dropped in at Romano's to shake hands with any of the old lot who might be present. The old waif was there, in the same place as before, and almost unchanged. He did

Politics for the Nursery.

VI.



I AM TOLD,

Al-ways is as good as gold;

And upon oc-ca-sions he

Is as brave as brave can be

Ma-ny a nas-ty I-rish cad
Rues the beat-ing he has had
When he ven-tured to of-fend
A-by who was Ar-thur's friend;
I-rish bul-lies do not dare
Now to stir, if Ar-thur's there
If a lit-tle boy they touch,
Ar-thur hurts them ve-ry much

Till their screams are heard a-far—
Hor-rid cow-ards that they are!

Un-cle Ce-cil looks with joy
On the pro-gress of the boy,
And the mas-ters all sur-mise
He will gain the high-est prize.
And his com-rades al-ways say
He is cle-ver-er than they.

Only Ran-dy Pan-dy winks,
Tell-ing no one what he thinks,
But 'tis said he's not a-greed
Thus to fol-low Ar-thur's lead,
And, I know, some folks have reck-oned
Ran-dy will be first, not se-cond;
Though at pre-sent it would seem
He is in a rac-ing dream,
And will nei-ther learn nor play
With his school-mates day by day.

Mas-ter North—if real-ly nice—
Ought to give him good ad-vice.

From "St. Stephen's Review," Dec. 21, 1889

not express any surprise or pleasure at the meeting after so long an interval, but once more said: "Phil, old man, lend me half-a-crown, will you?" Such was the greeting extended to Phil May at Romano's on his homecoming.

He always found the wherewithal to respond to such demands, though before he went to Australia he was often desperately hard up himself. He and Mrs May used to live in a little three-roomed flat in Covent Garden, and she used to do all the domestic work, but they seemed quite happy. I once supped in that flat when Phil May came of age. There were about half-a-dozen of us present, among them being A. M. Broadley, who was then by way of editing *The World* for Edmund Yates, and also doing much propaganda work for Augustus Harris and Drury Lane. As we were crowded in that little room, the lay figure got much in the way, but there was nowhere else to put it. I can see that lay figure very conspicuously in much of Phil May's early work, but after his return from Australia he always used proper models.

It is not strictly true that he reduced his work with special care to the really important lines because the processes of reproduction were in those days so bad. Phil May's line drawing was always so clear and strong that it lost practically nothing by reproduction at any time. He liked, however, to show how much could really be done by a few lines, and there he was certainly a past master. It was not in his early days that he made these sketches in which so much was shown by so little. It was in the latter times when he was a much more consummate artist and had made a full study of anatomy.

He returned to England for some time in the spring of 1890, and it was then that I thought out the scheme of *The Parson and the Painter*, which was to bring out the very best that was then in him. The idea was a simple one—viz. that an unsophisticated Parson should deem it

his duty to see life in its various phases so as to be better able to instruct his flock. He has an artist nephew who takes him round town, and round Paris, and also to race meetings, to Scarborough and other gay places. The Parson writes and the Painter illustrates their experiences. I should say here that we did actually go to all the places and scenes dealt with, though, of course, the bare facts are much expanded. If anything better has ever been done by a black and white artist, I, at any rate, have never seen it. The double-page drawings of *An Undress Rehearsal at the Alhambra* and *The Pelicans at Home* are really wonders. Then, too, the *Night with Slavin* is intensely humorous. I remember the morning it came out, for I took the paper over to Romano's and showed it to Slavin, who was there. It struck me while doing so that if by any chance he did not see the joke my position might be precarious; but he saw it right enough and was delighted.

Now I was sure that with the Parson and Painter idea all would now be well for the paper, but something utterly unforeseen happened which effectually darkened the prospect.

I will not go into it minutely here; for any animosities and hostilities that it created have long since died out, and Mr Horatio Bottomley and I, who were in some measure protagonists in the contest, have had many other and better subjects to think about since then.

I refer to the case of "The Hansard Publishing Union Limited," in which Mr Bottomley was the moving spirit; and he had the Lord Mayor of London, Sir Henry Isaacs, as chairman of the company.

The acquisition of the Hansard copyright was a very clever move, for that seemed at once to suggest stability. For the rest, the company was, in effect, an attempted combine of the printing trade of London and a good deal of the paper-making. Into the merits or demerits of the scheme and its ramifications I will not enter here—indeed they never at any time interested me; but I will just give

a few facts that serve to show the sequence of events which ended both the Hansard Union and *St Stephen's Review*.

I have already stated that Radclyffe was our finance editor. It happened in July, 1890, that he was ill and away at Cookham, but he sent up copy for the paper of 26th July, and it consisted of a letter severely criticising the balance-sheet of the Hansard Union. I simply read this in ordinary course and passed it for press. I left the paper "made up" at about 11.30 P.M. and next morning it came out with the finance article removed and some overmatter paragraphs substituted under the headline: "Interesting Items."

It soon transpired that this was the work of our printer, who was being absorbed into the Hansard Union and was to be one of the managing directors. He had waited until I had left overnight, and then taken upon himself to remove the article, which he thought might damage that company.

It was, of course, impossible to sit down under this treatment, and yet how ineffably foolish the printer's action was! He had printed for us for three years and we were good friends. I personally knew absolutely nothing about the Hansard Union, and if he had come to me and asked me not to let this article go in, as it might prove injurious to him, I would have stopped it with pleasure—at any rate until Radclyffe came back to attend to the matter; but as it was, I was forced into a fight for which I had no sort of wish. I at once instructed solicitors; made an affidavit on the facts and we got leave to serve short notice of motion on the printer that same afternoon. About two days afterwards he consented to an order that he should print any reasonable and proper matter I instructed him to print; and, on that, I demanded 2000 copies of the Finance page as I had passed it for press. This together with an autograph letter of my own explaining what had happened, and produced in facsimile, we sent broadcast to the Stock Exchange.

Thus the fat was thoroughly in the fire.

At the further proceedings in our action against the printers I met Mr Bottomley, who threatened many pains and penalties to our company for infringements of company law. I thereupon had the Hansard Union sued before its chairman, Lord Mayor Isaacs, at the Mansion House for neglecting to register something or other—I forget what—at Somerset House, and he was obliged to fine them.

Having now got fairly on the warpath, I brought out an issue of *St Stephen's* specially devoted to the Hansard Union, with a lovely cartoon in it of Sir Henry Isaacs, in his Lord Mayor's robes, as Millais's picture of *Bubbles*, the principal bubble being, of course, labelled "The Hansard Publishing Union Limited." These cartoons we printed in large numbers, and they were sold at a penny each outside the Mansion House.

I think the cartoon was too good to be utterly forgotten so am reproducing it here, though it must be clearly understood that I do so without the slightest vestige of ill feeling—by which, indeed, I was at no time actuated. It just serves to show how I fought in a contest that was none of my seeking.

After this the Hansard Union spent a lot of money on advertisements trying to suggest that Radclyffe had been trying to blackmail them or Mr Bottomley; but that was all nonsense, as was admitted when our action went a step further and then Sir Charles Russell and another eminent Q.C. were briefed to alarm us. They did not have that effect, and according to terms which Sir Charles Russell himself drew up our printers paid us £50 damages, all imputations on Radclyffe were withdrawn, and we agreed to let the Hansard Union alone until their next balance-sheet was published. Something about those terms did not suit Mr Bottomley, and he wrote to the papers to say that they did not concern the Hansard Union at all, but only us and our printers. The Hansard Union was in fact mentioned four or five times in the terms, so that this action on Mr Bottomley's part started

"BUBBLES"

Dedicated to the Lord Mayor of London and Mr. Horatio Bottomley,
With apologies to "Pears' Soap"
From "St. Stephen's Review," Aug. 9, 1890

the fight once more. It was recommenced by our printer suddenly announcing one Tuesday afternoon that he would not print the paper any more. We had to go to press on Wednesday and they had control of most of the printing trade. The position was one of much difficulty, and Mr Bottomley has written in a book of his that the paper did not come out that week. In this, however, he is mistaken, for we managed to find a printer all right, but only for cash, and with the other we had always done business on the basis of monthly accounts, and then he drew on us at three months.

Thus for four months to come there would be the cheerless prospect of paying cash to one printer and meeting the bills of the other. In fact it was a double outlay for that period.

The most deadly move of all was when the enemy sent round a circular letter to the publishing trade threatening them with libel actions if they distributed *St Stephen's Review*. This did not affect firms like Messrs Smith & Sons, but the smaller publishers were easily alarmed, and the circulation was reduced by over 2000 copies within a fortnight.

Meanwhile, however, the Hansard Publishing Union had not come off scathless, and was getting badly on the rocks, though it is far from my purpose to go into that story. The grievous thing was that *The Parson and the Painter* was coming out every week to an artificially reduced circulation, and I knew so well what was its real value, if people could only see it.

But we were engaged in a contest with opponents who were for the time being full of money, and for the first time in the strenuous eight years of the paper I saw the shadows really darken. Amid the turmoil of the conflict Radclyffe recovered from his illness and came back. We did all possible in the way of guaranteeing publishers against any conceivable action of the Hansard Union, but the small ones who sold only a quire or half-a-quire of the paper were not sufficiently interested to take any

risks; and so the position got worse and worse. The paper itself was never so good as in those days, and we used to have all Tattersalls' advertisements, which alone is a big asset. Phil May was doing better and better work, so were Percy Reeve, Tom Merry and all the rest of us, but the Hansard Union's ban was a very potent one, and we had never been financially strong.

About that time—it was in November, 1890—I wrote a song for the great MacDermott, entitled *The Fire-Escape*, and Percy Reeve composed the music. It never approached the lasting fame of *Charlie Dilke*, but it was a great success all the same at the London Pavilion, where it was first sung on 1st December of that year, and was in the bill for six weeks.

It was just after the divorce case in which Mr Parnell was concerned, and it had transpired in that case that Mr Parnell, in the prosecution of his amorous adventures, was in the habit of using a fire-escape—presumably ordinary bars on the side of the house, but it pleased the public to think that he took a regulation fire-escape on wheels to assist him. The words of the song may be worth quoting:

THE FIRE-ESCAPE

THE fire-escape's a glorious thing
To save a peasant or a king;
'Tis useful, too, if you desire,
For 'scaping other things than fire.
Perchance by some obnoxious dun
To ground at last you're fairly run,
Or if you hear outside your "den"
The horrid tramp of sheriff's men—

(*Spoken*) Visions of Horror! Holloway looming in the distance. Is there no chance to fly? Yes, I have it—

The fire-escape, the fire-escape;
You save yourself in every scrape,
Of any sort or kind or shape,
By scooting down the fire-escape.

A fire-escape should always be
Provided for each household, free,

For if, at home, the husband gay
Untrammelled spends a happy day,
And ladies fair and ladies bright
Are there with love and laughter light—
The wife all suddenly arrives;
How shall they flee and save their lives?

(*Spoken*) There is only one way out of it, and that is by—

A fire-escape, a fire-escape,
Of any sort or kind or shape.
Oh! how they push and scratch and scrape
When bundling down the fire-escape.

The fire-escape, that thing of joy,
Have always handy to employ;
For if the tax-collector dares
To set his foot upon your stairs,
Or when some lady of the past
Has found your whereabouts at last,
And with a voice not still nor small
Is talking loudly in the hall—

(*Spoken*) I tell you, it's frightful; but luckily—

The fire-escape, the fire-escape,
Is ready for you all agape;
Don't stay too long your form to drape,
But hook it down the fire-escape.

The fire-escape, the masher's friend,
Its ready aid will always lend;
And if a statesman—sad to tell—
Should love not wisely but too well,
And, in the name of Smith or Brown,
Escort his neighbour's wife to town,
A sudden knock!—a thrill of fear—
Here comes my husband, Charlie dear!

(*Spoken*) Heavens! What a situation! Hardly time to put on one's gloves. No chance to avoid detection; no way to save the lady's reputation. Oh yes, thank goodness, there is *one*. Happy, thrice happy thought—

The fire-escape, the fire-escape!
It was indeed a merry jape
When Charlie Parnell's naughty shape
Went scooting down the fire-escape!

MacDermott used to draw roars of applause as he developed the last verse until the name was given. The song was published with Mr Parnell on the front cover

wheeling a fire-escape, with the underline "O Romeo, Romeo!"; but he did not last long in politics after the affair, and the public, as its wont is, soon began to think of other men of the more immediate moment.

Our Christmas Number for 1890 was called *The Popular Poll*, purporting to be a record of an election under some dreadful new Reform Act. A supposed extract from *The Star* of the period had the following headlines:—

RIOTOUS SCENES AT NEWMARKET
BURNING OF THE JOCKEY CLUB ROOMS
ESCAPE OF THE STEWARDS
MR JAMES LOWTHER INTERVIEWED
PROSPECTS OF THE ELECTION

An extract presumed to be from *The Times* said:

The candidature of Mr Abington Baird has been received with many indications of public favour. Mr Baird's downright full-flavoured methods of speech are not without their charm among sporting electors; and his friends, Mr Charles Mitchell, Mr W. Goode, Mr J. Carney and others have been singularly successful in preventing any attempts to disturb the meetings which he has held.

One of Phil May's page drawings in that number represents the Bar of the New House of Commons, with Arthur Roberts as the Speaker. Messrs Gladstone and Parnell are pledging one another, and Romano, with a smart barmaid, is serving drinks. Tasker and the Shifter are present, also John Corlett, "Chippy" Bull, Jack Percival and other strangely mixed celebrities. Like all Phil May's work, that in this Christmas Number was strikingly good, notably a portrait of Frank Slavin as sergeant-at-arms; but in my opinion the paper had received its death-blow in the Hansard Union struggle. Radclyffe thought there was a chance to carry on, and I decided to leave it to him. I stipulated only to take the blocks and copyright of *The Parson and the Painter*, and so cleared out, 7th February 1891 being the last date on which my name appears in the paper as having "signed for the writers."

Politics for the Nursery.

HARRY CHAPLIN USED TO BE
Very fond of dogs, you see;
But when dogs go mad and bite,
Har-ry thinks it is not right,
So he tried to make a rule
For his com-rades at the school,
That they should with-out delay
Muz-zle dog-gies every day.

Some who thought it wise to shun
Rab-id hounds, ex-claimed "Well done!"
But some silly Kent-ish lads
Sulked for pet-ty child-ish fads—

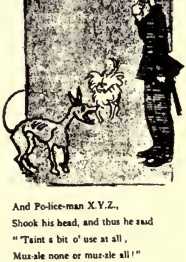
"Oh!" they screamed, "our dogs are dear
Ra-bies we do not fear;
Muz-zles would our dog-gies slay—
Naugh-ty Har-ry, go a-way!"

Others, too, most fool-ish boys,
Made a very stu-pid noise,
Shrieked in wick-ed pet-tish spite,

"What care we if dogs should bite?
What care we if men should die?
Muz-zling or-ders we de-fy!"

Har-ry Chap-lin quick-ly found
Muz-zling dogs was dan-ger-ous ground
From the dogs he caught it hot—
Some were muz-zled, some were not;—
Mad ones thus to bite made free
Sane ones with im-pun-ity;

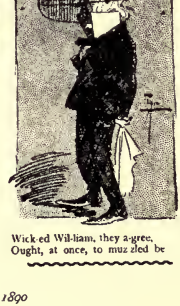
Fight your own



And Po-lice-man X.Y.Z.,
Shook his head, and thus he said
"'Taint a bit o' use at all,
Muz-zle none or muz-zle all!"

Har-ry must not be a-fraid
By the noise that fools have made
But the good Po-lice-man's speech
Ought a bet-ter course to teach
For the Mas-ters don't ad-mire
Dogs re-plete with rab-id ire

And they very much ap-prove,
Har-ry Chap-lin's pru-dent move
But his work he must not shun—
"Muz-zle all or muz-zle none!"
And, in-deed, the Mas-ters wink—
Muz-zles might be used, they think,
Very right-ly, on the crowd
Of the boys who talk so loud.



Wick-ed Wil-liam, they a-gree,
Ought, at once, to muz-zled be

From "St. Stephen's Review," February 1, 1890

CHAPTER XXXI

Lord Salisbury's Valediction—Phil May, 10 Downing Street—Dark Days—Appreciation of Horatio Bottomley—Success of *The Parson and the Painter*—A New Artist!—With Phil May at Newmarket—More Financial Trouble—Colonel North Steeplechasing at Lingfield—What to do next?—The Special Commissioner—Am well received—Good Company—William Easton and the December Sales—Arrange a Sale in U.S.A.—The International Horse Agency and Exchange develops New Life

IN that same issue of *St Stephen's Review*, 7th February 1891, appeared Phil May's last work for the paper. It was a portrait of Meissonier. I wrote the sporting article for a month or two more and at last ceased from doing even that. On 9th June 1891 I received the following letter :—

FOREIGN OFFICE.

DEAR MR ALLISON,

Lord Salisbury is sorry to hear that *St Stephen's Review* is no longer to have the benefit of your guidance. He does not doubt that any journalistic enterprise which you may inaugurate cannot fail to derive advantage from your management. I am yours faithfully,

SCHOMBERG K. M'DONNELL.

The above had special reference to an explanation I had sent giving the reason why a series which Phil May and I had been about to commence in *St Stephen's* was not now going to appear. It was entitled *Statesmen at Work*, and we had done "Lord Salisbury at the Foreign Office," thanks to his kindness, very well indeed. That was to have been the first of the series. Mr W. H. Smith at 10 Downing Street was to have been the second, and hereby hangs a rather amusing tale. I had got the appointment all right for Phil May and myself to go there

at noon on a certain day, and I wrote to Phil May giving him the hour and date, with a special note to be punctual. We were to meet outside 10 Downing Street, and I was there exactly to time, but he never turned up, and I, after about twenty minutes of suspense, did not venture to go in without him, but returned and sent a letter by hand to apologise as best I could for our non-appearance. To Phil May I wrote bitterly complaining at his failure to keep such an appointment, and when he declared he had never received a letter from me making the appointment I simply didn't believe him. About a week afterwards, however, there was returned to me my letter addressed—

PHIL MAY, Esq.,
10 Downing Street,
Whitehall.

And it was marked "Not known." This was the letter in which I made the appointment for him to be there, and it was quite true that he had never received it. I suppose I must have had 10 Downing Street on the brain to have made such a mistake in the address.

. . . . . .

However, it was all over now, and a bitter wrench it was to let go, and give up the struggle for the old paper which I had edited during eight years. Until then I had believed in myself and what I was pleased to consider my destiny. Now I had found a task beyond my capacity, and the shock of the discovery can hardly be realised by anyone who has not gathered that in all my earlier life I had been able to do whatever I set about, and that, too, quite easily.

Bright hopes seemed now to have vanished like a mere mirage and the outlook was cheerless indeed, for those eight years of continuous storm and stress had left me feeling older than I do now, though twenty-eight other years have passed. The financial position of the paper had been from first to last precarious, for it was a very costly

production in its later years. Yet it was paying well for quite a long time, but then came the extraordinary legal vicissitudes with resultant costs, and last of all the internecine contest with The Hansard Publishing Union Limited and Mr Horatio Bottomley. That proved fatal to both parties; but I will say this, that at that time I came to admire and even like Mr Bottomley—he was so absolutely indomitable and fought so hard. That conflict, though certainly fought with the gloves off, left not a spark of ill feeling behind, and whatever was said or written about Mr Bottomley in those days, no one can say now that he has not given whole-hearted service to his country during the long years of war. He has been the staunchest upholder of the cause of individual liberty as against bureaucracy and cant; and for horse-breeding and racing in particular his work has been valuable beyond estimation.

The crisis, from my point of view, however, was rather dreadful. It seemed out of the question to dash back into work at the Bar after letting these years slip away. I was living at Dorman's Cross and took some part during the bitter winter of 1890 in the making of Lingfield racecourse and stands, but that was only relaxation. Then I bethought me of *The Parson and the Painter*, and having employed a canvasser to get enough advertisements to pay for the production, I got a publisher to print 10,000 copies for sale at a shilling. They were produced simply from stereos of the old *St Stephen's Review* pages, and I wrote to Phil May, who was then at Scarborough, telling him what I had done, and that if anything came of it he should have half profits. What came of it was the making of Phil May's fortune. The first 10,000 copies were sold like a flash—1500 of them on York bookstall alone. Then the publisher said he would like to go on printing at his own risk and would pay a royalty. To this I agreed, and he went on and on till the old stereos must have been worn out. Very foolishly I had not taken the original drawings.

The papers became excited. *The Daily Chronicle*,

for instance, published a column article, entitled "A New Artist." This to me was the unkindest cut of all; for I had worked very hard all those years to make people appreciate Phil May as I did from the first, and now when my own best effort in that direction was published in collected form I found that the past might never have been—Phil May was at last recognised, but as "a *new* artist."

It must be admitted, of course, that *The Parson and the Painter* never had a fair chance in *St Stephen's Review*, for the Hansard Union tactics of threatening the publishing trade cut down the circulation of the paper so very badly. It may, I think, be claimed that but for these very adverse circumstances my idea that *The Parson and the Painter* would run *St Stephen's* into assured prosperity was very well founded. Be that as it may, Phil May never looked back again, after the collected book was published. He was quickly secured on the staff of *Punch*, as also for *The Graphic*, and he published book after book of studies from life, all of which were in great demand; but he never did anything better than *The Parson and the Painter*, which is indeed to my mind his masterpiece, though I may be thought prejudiced.

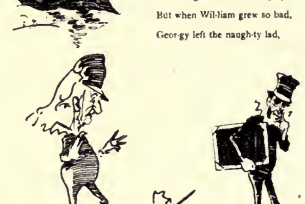
Somehow it put fresh life into me to know that I had not really been wrong with the Parson and the Painter idea, though in the ceaseless struggle with the old paper I had, doubtless, done many foolish things.

The idea of starting a new paper, *Big Ben*, occupied me for some time, and Phil May would have gone with me to that if the scheme had materialised, which it did not, and meanwhile I still did some work with Phil May. For instance, we went to do Newmarket for *The Daily Graphic*, and were the guests of Mr Stebbing at the Rutland Arms for a week. During that time we went the round of the leading trainers and, I think, put in some good work; but this was casual business and I had good reason to look with anxiety to the future.

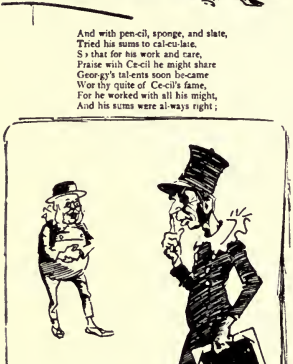
Then came further trouble. Radclyffe had made a

Politics for the Nursery.

EORCY GO-SCHEN USED TO BE
Ru-ler of the Queen's Na-vee.
That, in Wick-ed Wil-liam's day
Was the game he liked to play.
But when Wil-liam grew so bad,
Geor-gy left the naugh-ty lad,



And with pen-cil, sponge, and slate,
Tried his sums to cal-cu-late.
So that for his work and care,
Praise with Ce-cil he might share
Geor-gy's tal-ents soon be-came
Wor-thy quite of Ce-cil's fame,
For he worked with all his might,
And his sums were al-ways right;



So the Mas-ters some-times said:
"Of our school he'll be the head."

But when Ar-thur Bal-four heard
Words like that, he said "Ab-surd!
Geor-gy can-not ever be
Placed a-bove a boy like me;
I, of course, must be the chief,
Else the school will come to grief!"

Dan-dy Pan-dy, stand-ing near,
Ar-thur's words con-trived to hear
Then in fash-ion some-what sly,
Part-ly closed his dex-ter eye,
To his nose his fin-gers spread,
And in art-ful man-ner said—

"Geor-gy Por-gy he can state
Sums most nice-ly on his slate
Ar-thur knows a use-ful feat—
Irish but-lies he can beat.

But as Cock of all the school
Kan-dy least would play the fool,
And e're ma-ny months have sped
Kan-dy Pan-dy will be head!"

Thus the three, with vain sur-mise,
Aim to seize the high-est prize,
But to put such thoughts at rest,
All the Mas-ters think it best
That a plain but hon-est youth,
Famed for vir-tue and for truth,
Should be placed a-bove the three,
That they may not dis-a-gree.

Wil-ly Smith they there-fore rule
Shall be lead-er of the school.

From "St. Stephen's Review,"
Feb. 8, 1890

gallant effort to salve the old *St Stephen's*, but my instinct had been a correct one and he too had to give up.

The finance of the last company that owned the paper had been arranged with the paper-makers who held all the debentures of the company, and used to take payment by monthly accounts, for which they drew at three months, and themselves addressed the bills "To the Proprietors of *St Stephen's Review*."

I, as a director, used to accept these bills under a rubber stamp "For the Proprietors of *St Stephen's Review*." Suddenly I found a demand made on me personally for a large sum in respect of these bills that had not been met, and, to cut a long story short, I was held to be liable on the technical ground that the name of the limited company ought to have appeared above my signature instead of "The Proprietors." I well knew that in dealing with outsiders cheques or other negotiable documents have to show when they are signed for a limited company; but in this case we were not dealing with outsiders. The paper-makers were the holders of the debentures of the limited company, and, knowing it to be such, addressed their bills to the proprietors of the paper. The rubber stamp under which I signed, as director, conformed exactly to the way in which the drawers addressed the bills, but nevertheless I was held to be personally liable, and there was judgment accordingly.

Here was trouble indeed, but amid the shade of it came the light of the first steeplechase ever run over the Lingfield course. That was when Colonel North and his partner, Mr Jewell, arranged to have a match between horses of their own, and it was I who fixed that the Lingfield course should be the chosen venue. It was at the end of 1890 or the beginning of 1891, and the fences were ready, almost as they are now. The original luncheon-room had been built and the stands were approaching completion. Lethby, who was then steward of the Bellaggio Club House—now the Dorman's Park Hotel—took on the catering for that day, and Colonel North brought down a

very large party. The catering was first-rate; so was everything, until it came to the great match, and then Mr Jewell, who was represented by quite a useful jumper in training, had things all his own way, for Colonel North ran an ordinary fox-catcher, in reasonable hunting condition, and ridden by his deputy Master of Staghounds. This horse had his wits about him, and, after going once round, refused resolutely, at the fence opposite the stands, to commence a second circuit, so that the other went on and won as he pleased. I sent a report of that day to *The Sportsman*, under the heading:

COLONEL NORTH STEEPLECHASING AT LINGFIELD

and it will be found in the file of the paper. At the time it had never occurred to me for a moment that I should ever become "The Special Commissioner." The report was written almost in jest, and I transformed Lethby's name to M. Létheby, giving him a French origin. That name, so transformed, was so well received that it was promptly adopted, and Messrs Létheby & Christopher are now the leading race-course caterers. They never looked back from that day.

The late Major H. S. Dalbiac ("The Treasure"), whom very many old friends remember so well, never did more strenuous work than he did in the building of those Lingfield stands, for no contractor would take on the job, the weather being so frightful. He drew his own plans, was his own architect, bought the timber and other materials, and did all the work with local labour, employing day and night shifts, with double pay on Sundays. It was a terrible winter, and the local people have never forgotten the benefit that was derived from the making of the stands and enclosures at a time when there was no other work. I believe that Lingfield is to this day the most popular race-course in England—locally speaking.

The first actual meeting was brought off there with a temporary stand, but the second found the existing

structures ready, all except the one beyond the winning-post, which is of later date.

To me all these initial operations were naturally full of interest, but there remained the personal trouble—what on earth to do for the future of myself and family.

Here again the Disraeli motto—"*Forti nihil difficile*"—was very helpful—perhaps because it *was* Disraeli's motto. Had it not been, there are many quotations in a similar sense, such as "*Virtus repulsæ nescia sordidæ*," and so forth, but they might not have appealed to me.

Anyhow there came a time when no man has ever owned less than I did, and being one of the "have-nots," I can truly say I never thought for one moment that I had any grievance against those who "have." I was as impecunious as the most destitute person to whom a Bolshevist might in these days appeal; but that did not for a moment shake my faith in the conditions of life in a country like ours. I only blamed myself and my own luck. It did indeed seem hard luck, after all one had hoped.

. . . . . .

Towards the autumn of 1891 it happened that *The Sportsman* wanted a new man as "The Special Commissioner."

That I could be that man I never doubted, and for many reasons I should delight in the work, which had from the first interested me so much when Fred Taylor did it. And yet—and yet—was this to be the end of my career?

I am sure none of my colleagues of the last twenty-eight years will misunderstand me when I reproduce the query that troubled me at that juncture. I had loved racing and horse-breeding for its own sake and as my special hobby, never thinking to make it a means to a material end; and now I was up against the idea that it was to be the means—the business means—to an end, beyond which I could look no further.

Well, well, there are few indeed—probably none—who

attain to their early ideals, and I applied for this berth, feeling sure that I should get it, but I sent in a recent letter from Mathew Dawson which doubtless contributed to that end. Here is a copy of his letter:

MELTON HOUSE,
EXNING.
31*st May*, 1891.

DEAR MR ALLISON,

In case you may ever wish to take charge of a Stud Farm of thoroughbred stock, I should like to say that, in my opinion, no one is more capable of holding such a position with credit and profit to those concerned. It is within my knowledge that you were the principal Acting Director of the Cobham Stud Company when, at a comparatively early age, you gained great experience in the practical details of the work, and I also believe that owing to the system you originated, £2500 was saved in provender alone, during the last year of that Company. As to your knowledge of bloodstock and everything that relates to the various families and branches of it, and the most advisable methods of crossing mares, I can only say, after numerous conversations with you, that those are matters with which you are conversant in a degree which cannot be surpassed, and if you managed the Royal Stud, you would be the right man in the right place, always, of course, saving that no one can do better than Sir George Maude.

I am, dear Mr Allison, very faithfully yours,

M. DAWSON.

And so it happened that I became "The Special Commissioner" of *The Sportsman*, then owned by Messrs Ashley & Smith, and I must say, right here, that from both partners I received the greatest courtesy and kindness as long as they lived. This is all the more appreciable in retrospect, because I came from an eight years' period of fierce political writing, and did not for long after joining *The Sportsman* assimilate my style to the milder conditions which apply to racing authorities. Mr Ashley was, I believe, before the Stewards three times before I had been on the paper six months, and all on account of what I had written; but he stood to his guns well, and only got me to modify my agreement, which originally required a notice of three years to terminate. This was altered to

six months, for I suppose I must have seemed a sort of dangerous firebrand.

I have mentioned the hesitation—reluctance, if you will —with which I took on this job, but having crossed the Rubicon, I have done what is in me throughout all these years to make the best of it. Others can say what the result has been ; but I am sure of this, that I have never received more kindness and consideration than from the members of the sporting Press who go the rounds of the race-meetings.

The whole business was quite new to me at the outset ; for a weekly paper does not give you the remotest insight into the work of a daily. It seemed almost like going to school for the first time, but I found "Charlie" Green, who then was and still is head of the travelling staff, a mentor indeed. Many of those who then went the rounds have now gone over, and they were all good, cheery souls : rough-spoken Tom Callaghan, who could charm anyone if he sat down to a piano ; Jack Cobbett and his brother Martin, great characters both ; Charles Greenwood, a really first-rate journalist ; "Jim" Flood, whose recent death was a sorrow to all of us. Then there are others living, such as Paul Widdison, strong of speech but true as gold ; S. A. Phipps, who knows more than anyone about jockeys, and can adorn any subject that he touches. A good many others have died : old and young Bradley, of *The Sporting Chronicle* ; Neville, of the same paper, a thoroughly good sort ; John Corlett—— It really does not bear thinking about when one enumerates those who have gone, but Jim Smith, Sydenham Dixon, Jim George, Meyrick Goode, Fred Ball, Frank Pearce, Graham, Mellish, Luckman and some more of us remain to afflict our readers for, it may be, a few years longer. The mention of Sydenham Dixon recalls the memory of his predecessor at Newmarket, Donat Leonard, one of the best but strangely impulsive.

I did not set out to give anything like a comprehensive list of these good people, but I only want to indicate that

I have, I hope, made myself one with them, no matter what may have been my aspirations in earlier days. After all, the best rule of life is to do with your might whatever lies before you to do, and so it has happened that I have been "The Special Commissioner" of *The Sportsman* since 1891.

There was at least one great relief, so far as the work itself was concerned, and it was that the subject was one which was second nature to me, and could be dealt with almost as a matter of course at any time. It is a very simple thing to write about what you really understand. In fact it is more a question of the manual labour of writing than anything else.

I made a pretty good hit that first autumn on *The Sportsman* by going for Childwick as an extraordinary yearling, and he realised 6000 guineas. That was the week when Common won the St Leger and Queen's Birthday the Cup. Sir Blundell Maple bought Common for 15,000 guineas, and said England had need of him when asked to sell to a Continental buyer; but he would not make a match against Queen's Birthday, except on prohibitive terms—£10,000 a side, I think it was. Common was retired to the stud as a four-year-old, and this turned out to have been a bad policy.

In December of that year the late William Easton got me to assist him in buying a lot of mares at the December sales for Mr James R. Keene, and we also arranged to get together a large consignment of bloodstock of all sorts to be sent out to the United States for sale by Tattersalls of New York the following year, 1892. This I managed to do somehow or other, and what is more, the various lots, over 100 in number, crossed the Atlantic safely, and the sale was a very successful one, totalling about 30,000 guineas. So the more or less dormant International Horse Agency and Exchange was awakened into something like new life.

CHAPTER XXXII

The James R. Keene Commission—The International Horse Agency and Exchange Ltd. Sales in France—Successes continue —The Musket Blood—Carbine and Trenton—Cobham again —The Sporting League—Purchase of Merman—He wins the Cesarewitch—Good Men I have known—Meeting Trenton and Carnage at Sea—Phil May and Strachan Davidson—Other Cobham Horses—Collar—Retrospect—Worth of Racing and the British Thoroughbred

I HAVE now reached a point when I must hurry on to finish or be far too prolix. Perhaps, later on, another book may be written if people want it, but here let me say now that the bread cast on the waters in America in 1887 began to be found not later than December, 1892. It had been a great racing year, with the supposed poisoning of Orme and the other vicissitudes of the great three-year-olds which John Porter trained, one of which was La Fleche. It is impossible, however, to go into these details. What concerned me most was a cable received by me from James R. Keene, the Saturday before the December sales began, and it asked: "Will you execute commission for me next week?"

I replied "Yes," and the answer was:

Buy me ten high-class mares in foal, best horses. Limit average 1000 each.

This was indeed a commission and I should like to have had a fortnight to make all the necessary inspections and inquiries, but fortune somehow favoured me this time, and as I was well acquainted with almost all the stud grooms and breeders I could quickly learn all I wanted to know. By the end of the second day's sale I had got

six lots and cabled result. Next morning there was a reply:

Have cabled 6000 your credit Tattersalls. Very pleased. You can exceed instructions if you think fit.

On that I hurried to Park Paddocks, where Ixia, by Springfield out of Crocus (in foal to Donovan), and Sundown, by Springfield out of Sunshine (in foal to Ayrshire), were coming up the first lots, and outbid Captain Machell for both of them, giving 2000 for Ixia and 1000 guineas for Sundown. Finally came an instruction to increase the total number to twelve, including one maiden mare, if very good. The maiden that I secured was Bonnie Gal, four years, by Galopin out of Bonnie Doon by Rapid Rhone out of Queen Mary. She was the property of Colonel North, who never meant to let her go and had put two men up to buy her in. A misunderstanding between these two, who were on different sides of the auctioneer, resulted in my getting her, to the consternation of both, for 1600 guineas. She was the finest Galopin mare I ever saw, and later on became the dam of Disguise II. and many other winners. The whole twelve mares were bought for not more than 20 guineas over the 12,000 guineas, and as I had no instructions what to do with them, I arranged for them to go to Cobham, where Mr A. J. Schwabe was then breeding in a small way. I thus took up the threads again after some fifteen years, and Mr Keene on hearing where I had sent the mares was very satisfied. Everything went well. Each one of the eleven foaling mares had a good foal the following season (1893), and they were sent to the most expensive sires of the day. Later in the year they reached New York safely with their eleven foals, and they produced ten foals at the Castleton stud, Kentucky, in the following year.

That was the real foundation of Mr Keene's greatest successes on the turf, and some few years later he won more money in one season, in stakes, than anyone has ever done in any country. It was also the really sub-

stantial start of the International Horse Agency and Exchange Limited, which has never looked back since.

Within that year Mr Schwabe, who had bred Buccaneer, and was dissatisfied because another of the sort was not immediately forthcoming, wanted to clear out of Cobham, and old Shipley, his stud groom, suggested to me that I should take the stud. This seemed a big adventure, but Mr Schwabe was willing to leave his twelve mares at regulation tariff, and that would go far to pay the rent—for we had not nearly all the land at that time. Nor did Mr Schwabe want anything to speak of for fixtures or unexhausted improvements. Thus it was that I found myself, after long years, the sole lessee of the place which £100,000 share capital and £40,000 debentures had not sufficed to carry on.

The International Horse Agency and Exchange was now definitely established at 46A Pall Mall, with R. P. (now Major) Mortlock as secretary, and an agreement was made at the request of M. Halbronn, of the Etablissement Cheri, under which English brood mares were taken annually to Deauville sales and to Paris, in limited numbers, and each individual chosen by me. This was both profitable and interesting, and many of these mares produced great winners in France, such as La Camargo, Perth II., Masquê, etc.

As regards all this, however, my life is an open book to anyone who has read *The Sportsman* for the last quarter of a century. At any rate, I cannot do more than skim over it here.

I had a rooted belief in Musket after seeing him win at Warwick, and the first Cesarewitch I had to deal with in *The Sportsman* was that of 1891, for which Ragimunde (grandson of Musket) was my choice. Then after the great Badminton sale, when Musket's son, old Petronel, was alone retained, I got the late Duke of Beaufort to let me have him to stand at Cobham.

Meanwhile Memoir and La Fleche had pointed clearly to the prospects of the St Simon and Musket combination,

for their dam, Quiver, was nearly own sister to Musket. I wrote a great deal on this, and—I will not say *propter hoc*, but certainly *post hoc*—the Duke of Portland bought Musket's great son, Carbine, and brought him to England, where he ended his days at the Welbeck stud, after siring Spearmint and other good winners.

A little later I was fortunate enough to secure Bill of Portland for the late Mr W. R. Wilson, of the St Alban's stud, Victoria, and this son of St Simon got the best colt of his year in his first three successive seasons out there, all being from mares of Musket blood. There can really be no question about the efficacy of this combination, and later on I was lucky enough to get the really greatest Musket stallion to Cobham. That was Trenton, and his influence for the good of our bloodstock will remain as long as the general stud-book lasts, manifest as it already is through Torpoint, Rosedrop and Gainsborough.

It will always be a satisfaction to me that I got Mr Edmund Tattersall to come and sell once more at Cobham in 1895—though we had nothing very good to offer—and Mr Herbert Rymill was also there at the luncheon. I tried for many years to keep those sales going and sometimes they were very fairly successful. I still believe that such sales are the best; but there must be a lot of fashion in them to draw the buyers, and that means a lot of capital. Otherwise you only draw the free-lunchers.

I am scurrying on to the finish of this last chapter, but must not miss the institution of the old Sporting League, which through the medium of *The Sportsman* was entirely my own doing, and for a good many years it exercised real political influence, thanks mainly to the unceasing energy of Mr James Lowther and of Lord Durham, both of whom were on the Executive, together with Lord Coventry, Lord Hawke, the Duke of Richmond and Gordon, Lord Lonsdale, Guy Nickalls and others. It was a very powerful organisation indeed, and Mr Lowther in particular addressed meetings at all the important

centres in the country, but he died, and Lord Durham, when he became chairman of a House of Lords committee on betting, felt that he could no longer occupy a one-sided position; so he retired, and our fighting forces were thus sadly depleted. I myself had worked desperately hard, and on one occasion even went down as principal speaker at the Union (Oxford) in a Sporting League debate. I had never spoken there before and shall probably never speak there again; but we got a good majority on the right side. The questions I drafted in those days for Parliamentary candidates have never been improved on. Here they are:

TEST QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES

(County Council or Parliamentary)

1. Will you protect and maintain the rights of the people to the free enjoyment of all sports, pastimes and recreations, such as may at present be legitimately enjoyed?

2. Will you, in pursuance of the above undertaking, oppose absolutely and do your utmost by all lawful means to thwart all persons, other than legally constituted authorities, who may endeavour to interfere directly or indirectly with the people's sports, pastimes and recreations, or with any one of them, or with any incident thereto?

3. Do you agree that the people should have liberty in their sports, pastimes and recreations (under such rules as are from time to time laid down by those who practically understand the same), and that such liberty, while regulated by the law of the land, should be exempt from all other interference whatsoever?

4. Do you further agree that all persons or bodies of persons seeking in any way to obstruct, interfere with or suppress any sport, pastime or recreation, or any incident thereto (the same being decorously conducted and not contrary to law) should be discouraged and discountenanced by magistrates, County Councils, or other authorities before whom they may prefer complaints?

Space is rapidly contracting, but I cannot pass the purchase of that beautiful Australian mare, Maluma, for Mrs Langtry for 1000 guineas. She took a long time to recover from the voyage, but turned out very good

indeed here, though not so lucky as the next purchase, Merman, whom Mr W. R. Wilson had just offered me by the following cable, in November, 1896:—

Merman won Williamstown Cup. Best horse in Australia to win long-distance handicap in England. Legs like steel. 1600 guineas.

—when Mrs Langtry came into the office in Pall Mall and said she wanted to buy a horse that would win her a good race. I said I could not for the moment think of one in England, but would buy her a Cesarewitch winner in Australia if she liked.

She is a courageous lady, and on being shown the cable and being assured by me that the sender was a man on whom you could lay your life, she agreed without hesitation to the purchase, and Merman did win the Cesarewitch in 1897, the year of his arrival, besides many and greater races afterwards.

That time I felt I had touched the zenith of possibilities, and could not hope to ever repeat such a success, though there have been very many not far removed from it as time has gone on. Among these I cannot refrain from mentioning the purchase by me of Rosaline (by Trenton) for 25 guineas, and she subsequently produced Rosedrop, winner of the Oaks and dam of Gainsborough; and Lowland Aggie, for 35 guineas, who became the dam of Lomond, the best colt of his year and now a very successful sire. It is too near the finish, however, to amplify any such details.

What a number of admirable men I should like to write about in connection with these later years! Sir Tatton Sykes, so shy and retiring, yet so utterly good at the bedrock of him; Mr Leopold de Rothschild, who never once refused a claim for assistance when properly recommended. Then there was the inimitably jovial Mr Taylor Sharpe, the life and soul of every company in which he was. Mr W. Pallin, one of the most knowledgable men in Ireland, and Mr J. C. Murphy of the long beard and

ceaseless flow of talk. The Messrs Graham of Yardley, Mr Smith of Whimple, and his strange son; Count Mokronoski; Sir Blundell Maple, and then Count Lehndorff, whose death before the war I have always thought fortunate, for it would have been impossible in this country for those who had known him so many years to regard him as an enemy. He was like no German whom I have ever seen—indeed he might have stepped out of a Vandyke portrait—and I know that he once bought a mare and foal from Captain Greer on my recommendation, and without seeing it himself, for 2000 guineas. The foal subsequently won the German Oaks.

I had many dealings with Count Lehndorff, including the sale to him of Ard Patrick, which I did without even "a scrap of paper" and simply on his word. It came off all right, and though the Count was, I suppose, a Prussian, he must have been one in whom there was no guile.

The International Horse Agency and Exchange Ltd. has done an enormous business in all these years, and it would be tedious to recapitulate even the leading items, but I must mention the sale of Rock Sand for £25,000, as it is generally supposed that Lord Curzon was the member of the War Cabinet adverse to racing. The sale of Rock Sand was on account of the executors of Lord Curzon's late brother-in-law, Sir James Miller, and it might have been thought that such an object lesson in the value of the race-course test would not have been forgotten by his lordship. Rock Sand without a racing record would not have realised 100 guineas, but he amply justified the £25,000 which was given for him when his son, Tracery, was sent to this country and proved to be better than ever the sire had been. Indeed 40,000 guineas was offered for Tracery (sire of the Panther) and refused.

When Trenton and Carnage came to England in 1896 on the *Orizaba*, Phil May went with me to Plymouth to go on board and there meet them. It was the ship on which he had made his return voyage from Australia

and he knew all the officers. It was about 8.30 P.M. before the *Orizaba* was signalled and we went off on the tender, but our coming was expected and they looked well after us when we reached the liner. Trenton had been seriously amiss in the Red Sea but was recovering. Carnage (three parts brother to Carbine) was very well. We had a fairly quiet night, but next day as we continued our course along the Channel the officers, who were overjoyed to see Phil May, were immeasurably hospitable, and each one made his own special sort of cocktails. The genuine conviviality of such an occasion was too much for poor Phil, and when it came to the time for going to the captain's cabin to have a cocktail before lunch I had to go alone and make some excuse for my companion. That captain—Captain Collins—I have sailed with since a good many times, but never under such strange conditions, for who should there be in the cabin with him when I entered but Mr Strachan Davidson, the Bursar of Balliol College, who later on became the Master? Of course he knew me well and I was very glad to see him, but it needed a quick-change artist to come from the society of Phil May and his friends to that of even the most kindly Balliol don. All that afternoon and evening these studies in contrast were such that they became really trying, but all was well when we reached the docks next morning and I got away with the horses to Cobham, where there was a large party of journalists to meet them. Trenton could not commence a stud season until quite late that year, but the first foal sired by him in England was Longy, a very good two-year-old winner for whom the owner refused an offer of 7000 guineas. My meeting with Mr Strachan Davidson resulted in my going up to Oxford later in that year and taking my B.A. and M.A. degrees on the same morning. This I had neglected to do during more than twenty-two years.

In 1895 I had obtained a renewal of the Cobham lease for twenty-one years, and have carried on since the expiration of that term up to the present. Among the

many horses that have stood at the old place during this period I may mention, besides Trenton and Carnage, the Australians, Merman, Patron, Aurum and Great Scot; the French-bred Pastisson and Arizona; Bill of Portland, on his return from Australia; the Derby winners, Sir Visto and St Gatien; also Baliol (son of Blair Athol), Flotsam, Bushey Park, Santry, Flying Lemur, Marcus, Night Hawk, Amadis and Javelin. The best bargain of them all, however, was Collar, by St Simon out of Ornament (dam of Sceptre), whom I found at Durban when I was in South Africa in January, 1902. He had been kept in training, though seven years old, and was a regular white elephant there, owing to the war. I obtained the refusal of him at £2000, to last until after the Newmarket First Spring Meeting. Having seen Sceptre win both Two Thousand and One Thousand Guineas, I did not hesitate for a moment but cabled out to buy Collar, who was full for season 1903 at a 50-guinea fee before he reached England. After that year he filled easily at a fee of 100 guineas, and continued to do so until he died in 1914. He was a remarkable success, but this was not so apparent as it would have been had his stock been retained in England instead of being distributed all over the world. For example, there was one season in which Collar was head of the list of winning stallions in Roumania, second in Russia, seventh or eighth in the United States, and in the first twenty in England. This sort of thing continued, and at last there were winners by him in no fewer than fourteen different countries. So lately as in October, 1918, Cuffs, by Collar out of Murcia, won the Australian Grand National of 1750 sovereigns (four miles). The old horse was a good one himself on the turf, and almost all his stock was gifted with plenty of stamina. Brood mares by him are increasingly valuable, and one of them, Order of Merit, is the grandam of the Panther.

People have often imagined that someone besides myself was at the back of the International Horse Agency and Exchange Limited. But this was quite untrue.

The business was evolved partly by good fortune—no doubt—but mainly from the long experience—often dearly bought—which I have had of the British Thoroughbred and all that concerns him. It seems strange that where £140,000 of capital did not suffice I should have made good out of nothing, but such is the plain truth, though it is only right to acknowledge the very great help I have received throughout from those who have worked with me both at Cobham and at the London office. No one has any idea until they try it what an intricate and difficult job the export of horses is, and what a vast number of arguable points may be found in a matter of horse insurance. No one man could do all these things.

In the spring of 1918 we had valuable horses and mares to ship to Russia for the then Government and other leading owners. This was done and the animals delivered just as the Revolution was commencing. Such operations are no child's play. Moreover, we managed to ship the stallion, Night Hawk, to New South Wales in the autumn of 1918, when it was generally accepted that there was not room on board any ship for a horse to that destination. These and countless other difficult tasks occur in the course of such a business, and they can only be overcome by patience, hard work and practical knowledge of all the ropes and every detail.

And now while turning into the last lap I must take the opportunity to claim that I have proved what I undertook to prove in the Prologue of this book, and that if I have far from justified my own life, I have at any rate justified horse-breeding, racing and the British Thoroughbred. The most virulent Puritan will fail to find a flaw in the argument, for in my dark days, when education of the very best—as it then was—could not save me, my always familiar friend the British Thoroughbred did so, and that, too, effectually. It may seem a strange story, but it is an absolutely true one, and though we none of us like to divert what were our hobbies and pleasures into a serious

money-making business, yet the fact remains that I found myself able to do so when all other means failed.

Nothing can give back the many years of fighting against fate when hunting, shooting and all other sports except racing were cut out. To those I can never come back —at least it is very rare to find anyone able to do so after such an interval. Shooting, in particular, is not what it was in my young days. You then shot partridges going away from you, whereas now they come at you, and desperately fast too. Still one can manage to enjoy life, even when playing a singularly indifferent game of golf, and the pleasures attendant on horse-breeding and racing are perennial. I hope still to see another race-meeting at Thirsk, and, of course, at York and Doncaster; nor have I failed to retain the old Blink Bonny line of blood, from which one may still hope to breed a Bayardo, a Lemberg or a My Dear. Two young mares of this family are now at Cobham, one called Mary Queen of Scots and the other Orange Mary.

If it be necessary to refer to characters mentioned earlier in this book, I may repeat that Tom Palliser died at the age of ninety and Mr Kingsley at one hundred and one. Mr Arrowsmith has been dead some forty years. He was a good old soul and I liked him well, but he was quite unfit to be guardian of myself or anyone else.

The Kilvington property remained nominally mine through all the vicissitudes, but it was charged in a manner that left it a *damnosa hereditas* as far as I was concerned, and its only value to me was that it gave me two county votes, one for Thirsk Division and one for Northallerton. I have never failed to go and vote for the Unionist candidates, but after the New Reform Act plural voting is at an end, so I let the property be sold in the summer of 1918. That ended the sole remaining connection with the old place and I hope it may benefit its various new owners.

The kennels, by the way, had been turned to poultry houses when I saw them last and it did not look as though

famous terriers would ever be seen there again; but what would you? Every man to his taste, and I hope the present proprietor will, at any rate, breed fowls of the very best.

The range of the Hambleton Hills is in full view of Kilvington, about eight miles away, but no longer are the gallops there famous as almost the best in England. No longer do the stables harbour such as Velocipede, Flat-catcher, Knight of St George, Alice Hawthorn or even Syrian and Sundeelah.

If a stallion box remains it holds no Vatican—and a good thing too. The glories of Black Hambleton have departed ages ago. And so the world wags on amid chops and changes; but the course of the most beautiful and valuable animal in creation is upwards, ever upwards, so long as the racing test remains, and it would be a sorry day for our country if faddist and spoil-sport influences should ever prevail with such disastrous effect as to stop racing. It is inconceivable that this should be done, but the Puritanical foe is always on the watch.

And now let me really end this farrago of insignificant events, which are the more insignificant in view of the great ones through which we have all been passing. If it be asked why I have written this book at such a time, and what I have been doing in the great war, I shall answer the first question by shifting the blame on to Mr Grant Richards. In regard to the second, I can say that I have done a very little "bit" as a volunteer once more; but, much more important, I have done my very uttermost from start to finish to keep the flag flying as regards horse breeding and racing, and to maintain the supremacy of that great national asset and monopoly —the British Thoroughbred.

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